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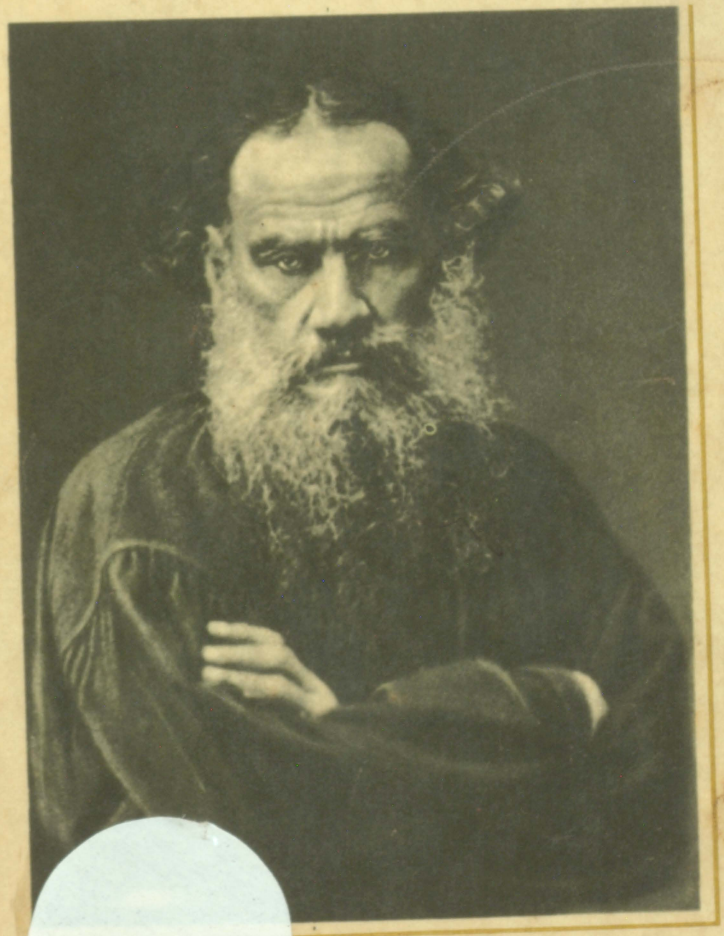
LEV TOLSTOY

Childhood
Adolescence
Youth



Lev Tolstoy. Daguerreotype (1851)

"Tolstoy succeeded in raising so many great problems and succeeded in rising to such heights of artistic power that his works rank among the greatest in world literature."

V.I.Lenin

LEV TOLSTOY

Childhood
Adolescence
Youth

Translated by Fainna Solasko

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
MOSCOW

Лев Толстой

ДЕТСТВО ОТРОЧЕСТВО ЮНОСТЬ

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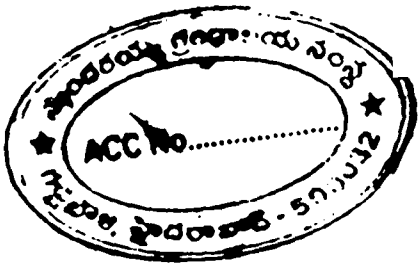

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CONTENTS

N. G. Chernyshevsky. A Review of "Childhood" and "Adolescence" 11

Introduction 22

CHILDHOOD

Chapter 1. Our Tutor Karl Ivanych 31
Chapter 2. Mamma 36
Chapter 3. Papa 39
Chapter 4. Lessons 42
Chapter 5. God's Fool 46
Chapter 6. Preparations for the Hunt 50
Chapter 7. The Hunt 52
Chapter 8. Games 56
Chapter 9. Puppy Love 58
Chapter 10. What Sort of a Man Was My Father? 59
Chapter 11. In the Study and the Drawing Room 61
Chapter 12. Grisha 64
Chapter 13. Natalia Savishna 67
Chapter 14. Parting 70
Chapter 15. Childhood 75
Chapter 16. The Poem 77
Chapter 17. Princess Kornakova 83

Chapter 18. Prince Ivan Ivanovich 87
Chapter 19. The Ivins 91
Chapter 20. Company Arrives 97
Chapter 21. Before the Mazurka 101
Chapter 22. The Mazurka 104
Chapter 23. After the Mazurka 107
Chapter 24. In Bed 110
Chapter 25. The Letter 112
Chapter 26. What Awaited Us At the Country House 117
Chapter 27. Grief 120
Chapter 28. The Last Sad Memories 124

ADOLESCENCE

Chapter 1. Travelling With Hired Horses . . . 135
Chapter 2. The Storm 141
Chapter 3. A New Point of View 146
Chapter 4. In Moscow 149
Chapter 5. The Elder Brother 150
Chapter 6. Masha 153
Chapter 7. Birdshot 155
Chapter 8. Karl Ivanych's Story 158
Chapter 9. A Continuation of the Foregoing 162
Chapter 10. A Continuation 165
Chapter 11. The Poor Mark 168
Chapter 12. The Little Key 173
Chapter 13. The Traitress 174
Chapter 14. My Reason is Obscured 176
Chapter 15. Reverie 179
Chapter 16. It Will All Come Right in the End 183
Chapter 17. Hatred 187
Chapter 18. The Maids' Room 189
Chapter 19. Adolescence 194
Chapter 20. Volodya 197
Chapter 21. Katenka and Lyubochka 199
Chapter 22. Papa 201
Chapter 23. Grandmother 204
Chapter 24. Myself 206
Chapter 25. Volodya's Friends 207
Chapter 26. A Discussion 209
Chapter 27. The Beginning of Friendship . . . 213

YOUTH

Chapter 1.	What I Consider to Have Been the Beginning of Youth	219
Chapter 2.	Spring	220
Chapter 3.	Daydreams	223
Chapter 4.	Our Family Circle	227
Chapter 5.	My Rules	231
Chapter 6.	Confession	233
Chapter 7.	The Visit to the Monastery	234
Chapter 8.	The Second Confession	237
Chapter 9.	How I Prepare for the Examinations	240
Chapter 10.	The History Examination	242
Chapter 11.	The Mathematics Examination	246
Chapter 12.	The Latin Examination	250
Chapter 13.	I Am Grown Up	253
Chapter 14.	Volodya and Dubkov's Interests	258
Chapter 15.	I Am Fêted	261
Chapter 16.	The Altercation	264
Chapter 17.	I Prepare to Pay some Calls	269
Chapter 18.	The Valakhins	272
Chapter 19.	The Kornakovs	277
Chapter 20.	The Ivins	279
Chapter 21.	Prince Ivan Ivanovich	283
Chapter 22.	Sharing Confidences With My Friend	285
Chapter 23.	The Nekhlyudovs	290
Chapter 24.	Love	295
Chapter 25.	I Become Better Acquainted	299
Chapter 26.	I Put My Best Foot Forward	303
Chapter 27.	Dmitry	307
Chapter 28.	In the Country	311
Chapter 29.	Our Relations With the Girls	315
Chapter 30.	My Occupations	319
Chapter 31.	Comme Il Faut	323
Chapter 32.	Youth	326
Chapter 33.	The Neighbors	332
Chapter 34.	Papa's Marriage	336
Chapter 35.	How We Took the News	339
Chapter 36.	The University	344
Chapter 37.	Affairs of the Heart	348

Chapter 38. Society Circles 351
Chapter 39. The Carousal 353
Chapter 40. Friendship With the Nekhlyudovs 357
Chapter 41. Friendship With Nekhlyudov . . . 361
Chapter 42. The Stepmother 365
Chapter 43. New Friends 370
Chapter 44. Zukhin and Semyonov 376
Chapter 45. I Fail 381

NOTES 453

Tolstoy, His Life and Works 455

N. G. Chernyshevsky

A REVIEW OF "CHILDHOOD" AND "ADOLESCENCE"

"Extraordinary powers of observation, a fine analysis of inner motivations, precise and poetic descriptions of nature and exquisite simplicity, such are the distinctive features of Count Tolstoy's talent." This is the opinion you will hear from all who keep up with the latest literary works. The critics repeated this evaluation, inspired by general opinion, and in repeating it they were quite true to the essence of the matter.

But must one limit oneself to this opinion which, indeed, has noted in Count Tolstoy's gift traits truly belonging to him, though not yet revealing those special shadings typical of these qualities in "Childhood", "Adolescence", "Notes of a Marker", "Blizzard", "Two Hussars" and "Military Tales"? A keen power of observation, a capability for subtle psychological analysis, poetic descriptions of nature, simplicity and elegance, all these you will find in the works of Pushkin, and of Lermontov, and of Mr. Turgenev; it would be valid to define the talent of each of these writers by just these epithets, yet not at all sufficient to distinguish them one from another; and to repeat the same of Count Tolstoy does not yet mean that the distinctive countenance of his talent has been captured, does not mean that this fine talent differs in any way from many other

equally fine talents. It must be characterized more precisely.

One cannot say that the attempts to do so have been very successful. The reason for their inadequacy lies partly in the fact that Count Tolstoy's talent is developing rapidly and almost every new work reveals new qualities. Naturally, all that one might have said about Gogol after *Mirgorod* would have been insufficient after *The Inspector-General*, and the opinions expressed about Mr. Turgenev as the author of "Andrei Kolosov" and "Khor and Kalinych" had to be revised and enlarged considerably when *A Hunter's Sketches* appeared, just as these opinions proved to be, in turn, insufficient after he had written new stories noted for their new qualities. But if a former evaluation of a developing talent proves insufficient at each of a writer's new steps forward, then, at least, at a given moment it must be true and exhaustive. We are convinced that not later than "Youth" appears will all that we now shall say be in need of considerable additions: Count Tolstoy's talent will reveal to us new qualities, as they were revealed in his Sevastopol stories, qualities which had no opportunity to reveal themselves in "Childhood", and "Adolescence" just as in "Notes of a Marker" and "Two Hussars" which followed he took yet another step forward. But this talent, at any rate, is quite sufficiently brilliant in order that each stage of its development merit the greatest attention. Let us then see what special qualities he has already had occasion to manifest in the works that are known to the readers of our magazine.

There is something cold and dispassionate about the power of observation as employed by some writers. Pushkin was most remarkable in this respect. It is difficult to find in Russian literature a more precise and vivid portrayal of the life and ways of a wealthy landowner of yore than the description that is to be found in the beginning of his story "Dubrovsky". But it is difficult to perceive Pushkin's own opinion of the qualities he described. It would seem that he might have replied to this question thus: "There may be different opinions; I care not whether this way of life arouses your sympathy or antipathy. I myself cannot yet decide whether it deserves

admiration or indignation." This power of observation is simply a keen eye and a good memory. You will not find such indifference among our new writers; their emotions are more aroused, their intellect is more precise in its reasoning. They do not with equal eagerness fill their minds with every image that crosses their path; they fix their eyes on those features which interest them most. Thus, for instance, Mr. Turgenev is particularly drawn to events which either positively or negatively relate to that which is called the poetry of life and to the question of humaneness. Count Tolstoy's attention is drawn primarily to the evolution of feelings and thoughts; he finds interest in observing the way in which a feeling, arising directly from a given circumstance or impression, undergoes a change, influenced by memories and scenes conjured up by the imagination, to return to the point of departure and again and again to wander off, changing along the entire sequence of memories; or the way a thought, born of a first impression, leads to other thoughts, is drawn on and on, blending fantasy with reality, dreams of the future with reflections on the present. Psychological analysis may follow various directions: one writer will be most interested in character studies; another in the influence of social relations and personal conflict on character; a third in the relation between emotions and actions; a fourth in an analysis of passions. Count Tolstoy is most interested in the psychological process itself, in its forms, its laws, in the dialectics of the soul, to give it a definitive term.

Lermontov, of all our other wonderful authors, was most strongly drawn to psychological analysis; but in his work, too, it still plays too much of a secondary role, is rarely revealed and then practically in complete subservience to an analysis of the emotions. Of those pages in which it appears more noticeably, perhaps the best are Pechorin's memorable reflections on his relations with Princess Mary. He notes that she has become completely enamored of him, having ceased flirting with Grushnitsky to give herself up to true passion.

"I often ask myself why I persist so in seeking the love of a young girl whom I do not wish to seduce and whom I shall never marry", and so on. "And why do I give

myself so much trouble? Is it envy of Grushnitsky? Poor man! He does not deserve it at all. Or is this the result of that nasty, yet invincible feeling which forces one to destroy the charming delusions of a fellow-creature simply to have the petty pleasure of remarking, when in anguish he will ask in what then is he to believe:

"'My friend, I have been through the same experience but you see that I dine, sup and sleep quite calmly, and I hope to face my death without cries or tears...'", and so on.

Here, more clearly than anywhere else in Lermontov's writing, has the psychological process of the crystallization of a thought been captured, yet, this has not the slightest resemblance to those descriptions of the evolution of feelings and thoughts in a person's mind of which Count Tolstoy is so fond. This is not at all the same as the half-dream, half-reflective bond of ideas and emotions which grow, move and change before our eyes as we read Count Tolstoy's story, this has nothing at all in common with his description of various events and scenes, expectations and fears moving swiftly through the minds of his characters; Pechorin's reflections are observed from quite another angle than the various moments of the emotional life of the personages portrayed by Count Tolstoy: for instance, by a description of what a person feels at the moment preceding an expected fatal blow, and then at the moment of the last concussion of the nerves from this blow...

Nowhere else in the works of our writers will you find psychological scenes observed from this point of view. And, in our opinion, that facet of Count Tolstoy's talent that makes it possible for him to capture these psychological monologues comprises one of its particular strong points, one that is wholly his own... Figuratively speaking, he is capable of playing on more than this single string, he can either play on it or not, but the very ability to play on it attributes to his talent a unique quality which is in evidence always. Thus, a singer whose range includes very high notes may not sing them if his part does not call for it, but still, no matter what note he sings, even one that is equally accessible to all voices, each will

be of a very special quality, born of his ability to produce that highest note, and in each of his notes there will be revealed to the expert the entire range of his voice.

The particular quality of Count Tolstoy's talent of which we have spoken is so original that only a very careful examination of it will reveal its full significance in the artistic value of his works. Psychological analysis is perhaps the most notable of qualities which feed creative genius. But it is of a descriptive nature, so to speak, taking a given static emotion and dissecting it into its component parts to produce, if I may use the term, an anatomical chart. In the works of great writers we find, apart from this facet, another direction, whose manifestation has a telling effect on the reader or viewer, that is: they capture the dramatic changeover from one emotion to another, from one thought to another. But usually we are confronted with only the two ends of this chain, only the beginning and the end of the psychological process. This is so because most writers who have a dramatic cast to their talent are most concerned with the end results, with the manifestations of inner turmoil, the conflicts between people, their actions, and not the mysterious process by which thought or emotion evolves; even in monologues which, it would seem, should most often serve as an expression of this process, the struggle of the emotions is nearly always present, and the noise of this struggle distracts our attention from the laws and changeovers through which the associations of these imaginings occur (we are concerned with their contrast and not with the ways in which they evolve); nearly always monologues, if they do not contain a simple dissection of static emotion, only superficially differ from dialogues: in his famous reflections Hamlet seems to become two men and argues with himself: his monologues, actually, belong to the same type of scene as the dialogues of Faust and Mephistopheles, or the discussions between Marquis Posa and Don Carlos. Count Tolstoy does not limit himself to a description of the end result of the psychological process: he is interested in the process itself, and the barely-noticeable indications of this inner life, replacing one another with unusual rapidity and inexhaustible diversity,

are portrayed most skillfully. There are artists who are known for their skill in capturing the shimmering reflection of a sunray on swiftly-moving waves, the glimmer of light on trembling leaves, its shadings in the ever-changing shapes of the clouds: it is usually said of them that they can capture nature vividly. Count Tolstoy does something akin to this in the sphere of the innermost movements of the psychological state. Herein lies, as we believe, the unique quality of his talent. He alone of all of Russia's magnificent writers has this ability.

Naturally, it must be inborn, as any other ability; but it would be insufficient to be satisfied by this too-general explanation: only through purposeful (moral) activity does a talent develop; and in that activity, whose exceptional energy is attested to by the unique quality of Count Tolstoy's works that we have noted, must one see the source of the power his talent has acquired. We speak of self-study, of the desire to constantly observe oneself. The laws of human activity, the play of passions, the sequence of events, the influence of circumstances and relationships can all be studied by closely observing others: but all knowledge gained in this way will have neither depth nor precision if we do not study the underlying laws of psychic life, the play of which is open to us only in our (own) consciousness. He who has not studied his inner self will never achieve a deep knowledge of others. The quality of Count Tolstoy's talent which we spoke of above proves that he has studied most closely the mystery of the life of the human spirit within himself; this knowledge is valuable not only because it has made it possible for him to portray the inner movings of the human mind, to which we have drawn the readers' attention but also, and perhaps still more so, because it has given him a sound basis for studying human life in general, for revealing characters and springs of motion, the struggle of the emotions and impressions. We shall not be wrong if we say that self-observation must have greatly honed his powers of observation, teaching him to look at others with a keenly penetrating gaze.

This facet of a talent is precious, as it is perhaps the most substantial of all claims to fame of a truly wonderful

writer. An understanding of the human heart and the ability to reveal its secrets to us – is this not an outstanding virtue of a writer whose works we reread in wonder? And, in speaking of Count Tolstoy, a genuine study of the human heart will invariably lend true merit to all he might write, no matter in what vein. He will probably write much that will amaze his readers by other, more striking merits (depth of ideas, interesting concepts, powerfully etched characters, vivid scenes of everyday life), and these qualities have served to increase our interest in Tolstoy's stories already known to the reading public, but a true expert will always find, as he now finds, that an understanding of the human heart is the greatest accomplishment of the writer's talent. A writer can capture his audience by more brilliant traits but his talent is truly powerful and sound only if it possesses this quality.

Count Tolstoy is also endowed with yet another force which imparts in its wonderful freshness a very special value to his work: this is the purity of moral sentiment. We are not proponents of Puritanism; on the contrary, we fear it. The purest Puritanism is harmful in that it makes the heart harsh and cruel; the most sincere and truthful moralist causes harm by lighting the way for dozens of hypocrites who use him as their shield. On the other hand, we are not so blind as to be unable to see the pure light of a truly moral sentiment in all the wonderful literary works of our century. Never has public morality reached such a high level as in our noble times, noble and magnificent despite the remnants of old grime, because it puts every effort into cleansing itself of its inherited sins. And the literature of our time in all of its wonderful works without exception is a noble manifestation of the purest moral sentiment. We are not trying to say that this feeling is stronger in the works of Count Tolstoy than in those of some of our other fine writers: in this respect they are all equally elevated and noble, but here this feeling has a special shading. In some it is purified by suffering, negation, made lucid by conscious conviction and appears only as the fruit of long trials, excruciating struggle and perhaps a number of repeated falls from grace.

This does not hold true in the case of Count Tolstoy: here morality has been re-established by reflection and experience, it never did waver, it has been preserved in all its youthful spontaneity and freshness. We will not compare the two categories of morality from a humanitarian point of view, will not discuss which is weightier in absolute significance, for this is the task of a philosophic or social treatise and not a review. We speak here only of the effect of moral sentiment on the merits of a work of art and must confess that in this case a spontaneous freshness of moral sentiment that seems to have been preserved immaculate since the pure period of youth lends the poetry a special, touching and graceful charm. In our opinion this quality is very much responsible for the enchantment of Count Tolstoy's stories. There is no need to prove that only given this immediate freshness of the heart could "Childhood" and "Adolescence" be told with that amazingly true coloring, with that gentle grace which breathes true life into these stories. As concerns "Childhood" and "Adolescence", it is obvious to all that if there were not an immaculate moral sentiment it would have been impossible not only to have written these stories, but even to have conceived them. We can offer another example in "The Notes of a Marker". Only a talent that had preserved its original purity could have conceived and written with such amazing veracity and such noble direction the story of a soul's fall from grace.

The beneficial influence of this quality is not restricted to those stories or episodes in which it appears boldly in the forefront: it serves constantly to revive and refresh a talent. What in the world can be more poetic, more delightful than a pure, youthful soul responding with joyous love to all that appears to it to be as exalted and noble, as pure and beautiful as it is itself? Who has not experienced his spirit becoming refreshed, his thoughts becoming clear, his whole being becoming ennobled by the presence of a creature of virginal spirit such as Cordelia, Ophelia or Desdemona? Who has not felt that the presence of such a creature breathes poetry into his soul and has not repeated together with Turgenev's main character (in "Faust"):

Come shield me with your wing
And still my anxious heart,
Provide a blissful close
For my enchanted soul.

Such, too, is the power of moral purity in poetry. A work in which its breath is felt acts refreshingly and soothingly upon us, as does Nature; or perhaps the mystery of Nature's poetic influence lies in its immaculateness. The graceful charm of Count Tolstoy's works depends, to a great extent, on this very same breath of moral purity.

These two qualities, a genuine knowledge of the secret movings of the psychic life and an ingenuous purity of moral sentiment which attributes a special countenance to the works of Count Tolstoy (will always) remain essential features of his talent, no matter what new aspects appear in it in its further development.

It goes without saying that his artistry will never forsake him. In discussing the distinctive qualities of Count Tolstoy's works we have not mentioned this merit, as it is but a part of or, rather, the essence of poetic talent in general, being actually but a collective name for describing the aggregate qualities peculiar to the works of talented writers. But, significantly, people who speak most of artistry are the ones who least understand its essence. Surprise has been expressed at not finding in "Childhood" and "Adolescence" as a main character some beautiful girl of eighteen or twenty who would fall passionately in love with a similarly beautiful youth ... What a strange concept of artistry! Why, the author wished to depict a time of childhood and adolescence, and not a picture of wild passions. Do you not feel that if he had introduced such personages and such passions into his story the children, to whom he wished to draw your attention, would have been overshadowed, and their sweet emotions would have ceased to interest you? In a word, do you not feel that the unity of the story would have been destroyed, that the author's concept would have perished and that the conditions of artistry would have been violated? In order to comply with these conditions the author could

not introduce into his story about children anything that would have forced us to forget about them and to turn away from them. To continue: the same critic feels that Count Tolstoy made a mistake in not depicting scenes of social life in "Childhood" and "Adolescence". Indeed, are there not a lot of other things which he has not depicted in these stories? There are no battle scenes, no descriptions of the Italian countryside, no historical memoirs, none of so much of what might have been but would have been out of place and ought not to have been depicted. After all, the author wishes to transport us back to the life of a child. And does a child understand social matters? Can he grasp the life of society? Indeed, this element is just as alien to childhood as is life in an army camp, and the conditions of artistry would have been similarly violated if the life of society had been depicted in "Childhood", as they would if there had been descriptions of military or historic events in the story. We, no less than others, should like to see the life of society portrayed in a story; but one must understand that not every poetic idea admits the introduction of social questions into a tale: one must not forget that the first law of artistry is unity of the work, and that is why, in depicting "childhood", one must portray childhood and not anything else, not social matters, or battle scenes, or Peter the Great, or Faust, or Rudin, but a child, his feelings and conceptions. And people who set forth such narrow demands can speak of the freedom of creativity! How strange then that they do not seek for Macbeth in *The Iliad*, for Dickens in Sir Walter Scott, for Gogol in Pushkin! One should understand that the poetic idea is destroyed when elements that are alien to it are introduced into a work and that if, for instance, in "The Stone Guest" Pushkin had suddenly decided to depict Russian landowners or had expressed his sympathy for Peter the Great, "The Stone Guest" would have become an incongruous work from an artistic point of view. Everything should be in its proper place: scenes of torrid love in "The Stone Guest", scenes of Russian life in *Eugene Onegin* and Peter the Great in "The Bronze Horseman". Thus, too, in "Childhood" or "Adolescence" only those elements are suitable which are

appropriate to that age, while patriotism, heroism and military life will find expression in "Military Stories", a great moral drama in "Notes of a Marker" and a portrayal of a woman in "Two Hussars"...

...Count Tolstoy possesses true talent. This means that his works are artistic, that is, the idea which he wishes to realize has been fully realized in each. There is never anything superfluous, because this would be contrary to the conditions of artistry. He never disfigures his works by additions of scenes and personages alien to the idea of the work. Herein lies one of the main demands of artistry. One must have genuine taste in order to appreciate the beauty of Count Tolstoy's work; but then, a person who is capable of understanding true beauty, true poetry will find in Count Tolstoy a true artist, that is, a poet with a wonderful gift.

This gift belongs to a young man with fresh and vital powers who has before him a very long road. He will encounter much that is new along this road, many new emotions will excite him and many new questions will occupy his mind. What marvelous hope there is for our literature, what rich new material life will give his writing! We predict that all Count Tolstoy has given our literature until now is but a pledge of that which he will create in the future; but how rich and wondrous is this pledge!

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1850 Lev Tolstoy, then twenty-two years old and living in Moscow, began work on a story entitled "Childhood" which he planned as the first part of a lengthy novel, to be known as "Four Periods of Development". Following "Childhood" would be "Adolescence", "Youth" and "Young Manhood".

In his plan for the novel Tolstoy put down in detail its "main ideas". His chief aim was "to clearly define the characteristic traits of each period of life". He also included the cast of characters, the main events in their lives and the "form of the work". This was to be a novel "in the form of an autobiography of a younger brother". In the plan he notes the differences in the brothers' characters. One is inclined "to analysis and observation", the other "to the pleasures of life". The brothers would be taken through the spheres of "feeling, study, society and money matters". In the process, the adverse influence their tutors, family troubles and conflict had on them would be examined.

Tolstoy believed every period of human life has its own inherent traits. In childhood sincere emotions and fidelity prevail; in adolescence the main traits of the future adult are scepticism, self-confidence, inexperience and

pride; in youth "the beauty of the emotions" plays a noticeable part, as vanity and a lack of confidence in one's own powers and abilities develop; in young manhood a further evolution of the emotions takes place, with pride and vanity being replaced by self-esteem, while a young man begins to seriously think about his place in life.

Although Tolstoy's first extensive work was not fully realized ("Young Manhood" was never written and "Youth" was only half-completed), his detailed plan did much towards organizing the actual writing. The title expressed its essence: "Four Periods of Development"; only in movement, in evolution can life *per se*, and human life in particular, develop. Tolstoy was to express this thought many years later in the formulas: "Life is movement" and "Human life is movement". By combining these two, he concluded: "All is movement. A human being is constantly in transition, and that is why everything becomes clear to him only through movement." Thus, early in the writer's career there were formed philosophic formulas which were later to determine the most significant aspects of his outlook and writing.

In this trilogy we find the typical Tolstoy protagonist: a seeker of truth, a defender of truth, a truly moral and exceptionally humane young man who has a gift of observation and a distinctive cast of mind.

From his earliest years and to the end of his life Tolstoy was fond of classifying people in groups according to their way of thinking and character traits. He held that there were two main types of intellect: "the intellect of the mind" (cold rationality and harsh logic) and "the intellect of the heart" (heightened by emotionality, sentimentality, and compassion). Tolstoy believed that the best works were written "from the heart" and preferred them to those that were written "from the head". Nikolenka Irteniev, the main character of the trilogy, possesses both the "intellect of the mind" and "intellect of the heart". He is a person who thinks, analyzes and evaluates events, his own actions and those of others. His innate compassion makes him try to be better, purer, more just, to see the weak and reprehensible sides of his character and to

mercilessly pass judgement on himself for every misdemeanor, for every infringement of the rules of behavior he has drawn up for himself.

It is commonly held, among students of Tolstoy, that the main characters of his books are in many aspects autobiographical, while many of the secondary and episodic characters had actual prototypes, especially those of his early works. Thus, many traits typical of Tolstoy are to be found in the main character, Nikolenka, while his relatives, friends and tutors have been depicted in the other characters of the story. A. M. Islenyev, an old family friend of the Tolstoys, was the prototype for Nikolenka's father. T. A. Kuzminskaya, his granddaughter and Tolstoy's sister-in-law, wrote: "I called Grandfather into the garden ... and listened to his stories about whom Lev Nikolayevich had portrayed in his 'Childhood'.

"'And didn't you recognize me?' Grandfather asked.

"'Yes, by the way you jerk your shoulder. Mama read it aloud to me, but she kept leaving parts out,' I said naively.

"'And she was right,' Grandfather said. 'And Volodya is his (Tolstoy's) brother Sergei, and Lyubochka is Maria Nikolayevna.' [1]

"'And who is Sonichka Valakhina?' I asked.

"'That is Sonichka Koloshina, his first love. She never did marry. And he portrayed his tutor St.-Tomas, too. Dmitry Nekhlyudov in *Youth* is his brother Dmitry. He was quite an original man ... All the Tolstoys were very original.'"

This information was corroborated by the author, as written down by his family and friends. He said that the German tutor Karl Ivanych was the tutor Fyodor Ivanych Rössel who had lived with the Tolstoys in Yasnaya Polyana, while the French governess Mimi was the Islenyevs' governess. Her daughter Juzenka is portrayed as Katenka in *Childhood* (Dunichka Temyasheva, who was brought up in the Tolstoy family, was a second prototype for Katenka). In the first version the butler Foka,

[1] Lev Tolstoy's sister. – *Ed.*

the housekeeper Paraskovia and the servant Nikolai all appear under their own names ... According to N. N. Gusev, Tolstoy's biographer, "the country house described in the story is the old Yasnaya Polyana house which no longer exists."

Late in life Tolstoy was to say: "...I often write from life. Formerly, I even used the real names of the protagonists in my drafts in order to more clearly imagine the person I was describing ... But I believe that if one were to portray a given person from life the result would not be at all typical ... One must take a given person's main, most characteristic traits and add to them the characteristic traits of other persons you have observed... Then the personage will be typical. One must observe many similar people in order to create a definite type." In the introduction to his "Recollections", begun in 1903, Tolstoy wrote: "My intention was to depict a story that was not my own, but that of my childhood friends, and so there resulted the jumble of events of their and my childhood." When "Childhood" was first published in the magazine *Sovremennik* in the autumn of 1852 and entitled "The Story of My Childhood", the writer was much annoyed at the editors for having changed his title. "Who is interested in the story of *my childhood*?" Tolstoy wrote to the editor. "...I intended 'Childhood' to be the first part of a novel, of which the following were to be 'Adolescence', 'Youth', and 'Young Manhood'."

Tolstoy worked on the first part of the novel for over a year. After rewriting the story three times, he noted in his diary: "It seems to me that 'Childhood' is not completely bad. If I had sufficient patience to rewrite it a fourth time it might even be good."

Tolstoy sent the story to *Sovremennik*, but did not disclose his name, signing it only with the initials "L. N." Both readers and critics received it warmly. Nekrasov, Turgenev, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Goncharov and other outstanding Russian writers all acclaimed the first published work of the young, unknown writer.

"Childhood" gives the reader a deep understanding of an entire period in a person's life. If we count time by the calendar, only seven months in the life of Nikolenka pass

in the first part of the trilogy, but Tolstoy goes far beyond the limits of chronological time.

"When I was writing 'Childhood'," Tolstoy said in 1908, "it seemed to me that I was the first to feel and to portray all the delights and poetry of childhood." Indeed, it is difficult to name another work of Russian or world literature in which the earliest period of a person's life, his childhood, has been portrayed so poetically and bathed in joyous and, at the same time, sad memories. "Happy, happy, irremeable days of childhood! How can one fail to love and cherish its memories? These memories refresh and ennoble my soul and are a source of my greatest delight," Tolstoy wrote. In describing Nikolenka's childhood so poetically Tolstoy did not conceal its gloomier sides. Nikolenka is deeply hurt when he encounters cruelty, rudeness and insincerity.

Tolstoy believed adolescence to be the most difficult period of his life; he called it "the desert of adolescence" and confessed that he would have liked to traverse it as quickly as possible to reach his youth, which he imagined to be "full of delight and poetry".

The second part of the trilogy is also written as a series of short chapters, bound together not so much by the plot as by their inner ties.

"Adolescence", too, was widely acclaimed by the reading public and received excellent reviews. This induced Tolstoy to begin the third part of the trilogy, "Youth", completing the first half of the story in eighteen months of writing, most of which was done during the Crimean War in Sevastopol where Tolstoy, then an artillery officer, was in command of one of the batteries.

"Youth" censures the ideals of a *comme il faut* person which were those of the youthful protagonist and his peers of the nobility. Nikolai Irteniev's classmates at the University who did not belong to the privileged classes helped him to understand just how worthless these ideals were. There is reason why the last chapter is symbolically entitled "I Fail".

"Youth" was also published in the *Sovremennik* (1857). In the 12th issue of the magazine for 1856 it carried a review of "Childhood", "Adolescence" and "Military

Stories" by Chernyshevsky, a foremost Russian critic, which today is still one of the best reviews of the first two parts of the trilogy.

In this first complete work by Lev Tolstoy we find clearly defined a theme that was to become the central one of all of his work: the disunity and dissociation of people in a society which is divided into classes, estates and other social groups. The defense of all that is best in a person, the desire, from earliest childhood on, to forever shield this best from evil influences and the battle between good and evil during various stages in an individual's development make this trilogy a work that will never become dated.

Konstantin Lomunov

CHILDHOOD

Chapter I

OUR TUTOR KARL IVANYCH

On August 12, 18..., exactly three days after my birthday on which I was ten and had received such wonderful gifts, Karl Ivanych awakened me at 7 o'clock in the morning by swatting a fly right over my head with a fly-swatter made of blue sugar-bag paper nailed to a stick. He did this so clumsily that he jarred the small icon of my patron saint which hung from the oaken headboard of my bed and that the dead fly fell right onto my head. I stuck my nose out from under the covers, steadied the icon with my hand, for it was still swinging, brushed the dead fly to the floor and looked at Karl Ivanych through sleepy, but angry eyes. He, however, dressed in his belted, quilted print dressing-gown, knitted red tasselled skullcap and soft goatskin boots, continued pacing around the room, aiming at and swatting flies.

"Of course," I said to myself, "I am little, but why should he disturb me? Why isn't he swatting flies by Volodya's bed? Look how many there are there! No, Volodya is older than I, I'm younger than everyone else: that's why he torments me. That's all he ever thinks of," I whispered, "of being disagreeable. He can see he's awakened and frightened me, but acts as though he hasn't noticed ... how loathsome he is! And his dressing-gown and cap and tassel are all loathsome!"

As I was mentally expressing my annoyance with Karl Ivanych, he went over to his bed, glanced at the watch that hung over it in a beadwork slipper-pouch, hooked the fly-swatter on a nail and turned to us in what I could see was the best of good humor.

"*Auf, Kinder, auf! S'ist Zeit. Die Mutter ist schon im Saal,*"[1] he called in his kind German voice, then came over to me, sat down at the foot of the bed and took his snuffbox from his pocket. I pretended to be asleep. Karl Ivanych took a pinch, wiped his nose, snapped his fingers and then only did he get around to me. Chuckling, he began to tickle my feet. "*Nun, nun, Faulenzer*!"[2] he said.

Though I was terribly ticklish I did not jump up and did not reply, but stuck my head farther under the pillows and kicked as hard as I could, doing my best to keep from laughing.

"How kind he is and how he loves us. How could I have thought ill of him?"

I was vexed at myself and at Karl Ivanych, I wanted to laugh and to cry. I was in a state of nervous excitement.

"*Ach, lassen Sie,*[3] Karl Ivanych!" I shouted with tears in my eyes as I stuck my head out from under the pillows.

Karl Ivanych was surprised, left my feet alone and began questioning me anxiously: what was wrong? Had I had a bad dream? His kind German face and the compassion with which he attempted to discover the reason for my tears made them flow faster. I was ashamed and could not understand how but a moment before I could have thought ill of Karl Ivanych and found his dressing-gown, cap and tassel loathsome. Now, on the contrary, they all seemed extremely pleasing and even the tassel seemed to be clear evidence of his goodness. I said I was crying because I had had a bad dream and had dreamt that Mamma had died and was being taken to the cemetery. I invented all this, for I really could not recall what I had dreamt that night, but when Karl Ivanych, moved by my words, began to comfort and console me, I

[1] Get up, children, get up. It's time. Your mother is already in the dining room.

[2] Now then, lazybones!

[3] Oh, leave me alone!

imagined that I had truly dreamt this terrible dream and I now shed tears for a different reason.

When Karl Ivanych left me I sat up in bed and began pulling my stockings on my small feet. My tears abated somewhat, but gloomy thoughts of the invented dream persisted.

The valet, Nikolai, a dapper little man, always grave, neat and respectful and a great friend of Karl Ivanych's, entered. He brought in our clothes and boots for Volodya, and for me a pair of hateful shoes with bows which I still wore. I would have been ashamed to cry in his presence; besides, the morning sun was streaming merrily in through the windows, and Volodya, mimicking Marya Ivanovna (our sister's governess), was laughing so infectiously as he stood over the washstand that even the sober-looking Nikolai, a towel flung over his shoulder, soap in one hand and a jug of water in the other, smiled as he said,

"Come now, Vladimir Petrovich, do be good enough to wash up."

I brightened visibly.

"*Sind Sie bald fertig*?" [1] Karl Ivanych called from the school room.

His voice was stern and without a trace of the kindness which had touched me to tears. In the schoolroom Karl Ivanych was a changed man: he was a tutor. I dressed quickly, washed and, brush in hand and smoothing down my wet hair, responded to his call.

Karl Ivanych, with his spectacles on his nose and a book in his hand, sat in his usual place between the door and the window. To the left of the door were two shelves: one was ours, the children's shelf, and the other was Karl Ivanych's *own*. Ours contained a motley variety of schoolbooks and books for reading: some standing upright, others lying about. Of these only the two large red-bound volumes of *Histoire des voyages* were set decorously against the wall; and then there followed tall, thick, large and small books, bindings without books and books without bindings, everything that was crammed into place

[1] Are you nearly ready?

before recess, when we were told to put the library in order, as Karl Ivanych so pompously called this shelf. The collection of books on his *own* shelf, though not as large as ours, was even more varied. I recall three of them: an unbound German brochure on the manuring of cabbage rows, one volume of a *History of the Seven Years' War* bound in parchment with a hole burnt in one corner, and a complete course in hydrostatics. Karl Ivanych spent most of his time reading and had even ruined his eyesight doing so; however, he read nothing save these books and *The Northern Bee.*

Of the objects on Karl Ivanych's shelf there was one that reminds me of him more than any other. This was a cardboard disk attached to a wooden stand in which it could be moved by means of wooden pegs. A picture was pasted on the disk, a caricature of a lady and a hairdresser. Karl Ivanych was very clever at pasting and had invented and made the cardboard disk to shield his weak eyes from the bright light.

I can still see the tall figure in the quilted dressing-gown and red cap from under which his thin gray hair protrudes. He is seated beside a small table, and the disk with the hairdresser on it casts a shadow on his face. In one hand he has a book, the other rests on the arm of his chair; beside him are a watch with a huntsman painted on the face, a checkered handkerchief, a round black snuff-box, a green spectacle case and a pair of snuffers on a little tray. All lie so decorously and neatly, each in its proper place, that this orderliness is sufficient to convince one that Karl Ivanych's conscience is clear and his soul is at peace.

Many were the times when having run about to my heart's content in the salon downstairs I would tiptoe stealthily up to the schoolroom to find Karl Ivanych all alone, sitting in his armchair, reading one of his favorite books with an expression of calm dignity. Sometimes I would come upon him at a moment when he was not reading: his spectacles would have slipped down on his large aquiline nose, his half-closed blue eyes would have a peculiar expression, and his lips would be turned up in

a sad smile. It would be still in the room where the only sounds were his regular breathing and the ticking of the watch with the huntsman on its face.

He would not notice me, but I would stand by the door, thinking: "Poor, poor old man! There are so many of us; we play and have fun, but he is all alone, with no one to comfort him. He's right when he says he's an orphan. And the story of his life is so dreadful! I remember him telling it to Nikolai. How dreadful to be in his situation!" And I would feel so sorry for him that I would go up to him, take his hand and say: "*Lieber*[1] Karl Ivanych!" He was pleased when I addressed him thus; he would always pet me, and I could see he was touched.

Maps hung on the other wall, most of them torn but pasted together skillfully by Karl Ivanych. On the third wall, in the middle of which was a door leading to the stairs, there hung on one side two rulers; one of them, all scored, was ours, and the other, a new one, was his *own*, which he used more for incitement than for ruling lines; on the other side was a blackboard on which our serious misdemeanors were marked by naughts and our lesser ones by crosses. To the left of the board was the corner in which we were made to kneel when we were punished.

How well I remember that corner! I remember the damper in the brick oven, the air hole in the damper and the noise it made when it was turned. I would be kneeling in the corner for so long that my knees and back would ache, thinking: "Karl Ivanych has forgotten all about me: he must be quite comfortable in his soft armchair, reading his hydrostatics, but what about me?" And I would begin, in order to remind him of my existence, to softly open and close the damper or to chip the plaster off the wall, but if an especially large piece would suddenly fall loudly to the floor, indeed, the fright it caused was worse than any punishment. I would turn to look at Karl Ivanych, but he would be sitting there, book in hand, seeming not to have noticed at all.

The table in the center of the room was covered with

[1] Dear.

a tattered black oilcloth from under which its whittled edges could be seen. Several unpainted stools, polished from long use, were set around the table. The last wall had three windows in it. This was the view from them: directly beneath was a road on which every pothole, every stone and every rut were familiar and dear to me; beyond the road was an alley of trimmed lindens; farther on one could glimpse a wattle fence here and there; across the alley were a meadow bordered by a threshing floor on one side and a wood opposite; the watchman's hut could be seen deep in the wood. The right window offered a view of a part of the veranda on which the grown-ups usually sat before dinner. At times, as Karl Ivanych corrected a page of dictation, I would look that way and see Mamma's dark head, somebody's back and catch the sound of conversation and laughter; I'd feel so vexed because I could not be there and would wonder: "When will I grow up, finish studying and always be with those I love instead of writing dialogues?" Vexation would give way to sadness and, heaven only knows why or wherefore, I would become so lost in thought that I would not hear Karl Ivanych grumbling over my mistakes.

Karl Ivanych took off his dressing-gown, put on his blue dress-coat with the padding and gathers at the shoulders, straightened his cravat before the looking glass and led us downstairs to greet our mother.

Chapter 2

MAMMA

My mother was in the drawing room, pouring out tea; she held the teapot in one hand and had the other on the tap of the samovar, from which water flowed over the top of the teapot onto the tray. But though she was looking fixedly at it, she did not notice this, nor did she notice our entering.

So many memories of the past arise when one tries to recall the features of a beloved being that one perceives

them but dimly through these memories, as though through tears These are the tears of the imagination When I attempt to recall my mother as she was then I can only recall her brown eyes, always expressing the same goodness and love, the mole on her neck a little below the place where the fine hair curled, a small white eyelet collar and a gentle dry hand which so often caressed me and which I so often kissed, but her general expression escapes me

To the left of the sofa was an old English grand piano My dark-haired, dark-eyed sister Lyubochka sat at the piano playing Clementi's *Etudes* with obvious effort, her pink little fingers just scrubbed in cold water She was eleven years old, she wore a short gingham frock, white lace-edged pantalets and could only take an octave as an arpeggio Marya Ivanovna sat sideways beside her, wearing a cap with pink ribbons and a short light-blue jacket Her ill-tempered red face became even more forbidding the moment Karl Ivanych entered She looked at him severely and, ignoring his bow, continued to count, beating time with her foot "*Un, deux, trois, un, deux, trois*", still louder and more imperiously than before

Karl Ivanych, paying no attention to this whatsoever, approached my mother, greeting her as always in German She roused herself, shook her head, as though hoping thus to drive away her depressing thoughts, offered Karl Ivanych her hand and kissed his wrinkled temple as he kissed it

"*Ich danke, lieber*[1] Karl Ivanych," and, continuing in German, she asked "Did the children sleep well?"

Karl Ivanych was deaf in one ear and now could hear nothing at all above the sounds of the piano He bent closer to the sofa, leaning one hand on the table and standing on one foot, and with a smile which at the time I imagined was the height of refinement, raised his cap and said

"Will you excuse me, Natalia Nikolayevna?"

In order not to chill his bald head Karl Ivanych never removed his red cap, but each time, on entering the draw-

[1] Thank you, dear

ing room, he would ask for permission to keep it on.

"Put it on, Karl Ivanych ... I said, did the children sleep well?" Mamma repeated, moving closer to him and speaking rather loudly.

But once again he heard nothing, covered his bald pate with the red cap and smiled more amiably than before.

"Wait a moment, Mimi," Mamma said to Marya Ivanovna with a smile. "One can't hear a thing."

When my mother smiled, although her face was very pretty, it became incomparably more lovely, and everything about seemed to brighten. If in life's trying moments I might have but glimpsed this smile I should not have known the meaning of grief. It seems to me that what we call beauty in a face lies in the smile: if a smile makes it more lovely, the face is beautiful; if it brings no change, it is ordinary, if it disfigures it, it is ugly.

Kissing me, Mamma took my head between her hands, tilted it back, looked at me closely and said:

"Were you crying today?"

I did not reply. She kissed my eyes and asked in German:

"What made you cry?"

When she spoke to us lovingly she always conversed in this language, in which she was fluent.

"I cried in my sleep, Mamma," I said, recalling my invented dream in every detail and shuddering involuntarily at the recollection.

Karl Ivanych confirmed this, but said nothing of my dream. After speaking a while of the weather, a conversation in which Mimi also took part, Mamma put six lumps of sugar on the tray for certain especially favored servants, rose and went over to the embroidery frame which stood by the window.

"Now go to Papa, children, and tell him to be sure to come and see me before he goes to the threshing floor."

The music, the counting and the stern looks were resumed, and we went off to see Papa. Passing through the room which since Grandfather's day had been known as *the butler's room*, we entered the study.

Chapter 3

PAPA

He stood at his writing table and, pointing to some envelopes, papers and stacks of money, spoke angrily and heatedly to Yakov Mikhailov, the steward, who, standing in his usual place between the door and the barometer, hands behind his back, was rapidly moving his fingers.

The more excited Papa became, the faster the fingers waggled and, on the contrary, when Papa paused, the fingers would also become still, but whenever Yakov spoke his fingers would become extremely agitated and twitch frantically. Their movements, I believe, were a clue to Yakov's innermost thoughts. His face, however, was always placid, reflecting its sense of dignity and, at the same time, deference, saying, as it were: I am right; however, as you please!

Noticing us, Papa merely said: "Wait a minute."

And, motioning with his head, indicated that one of us should shut the door.

"My Lord! What is the matter with you today, Yakov?" he continued, addressing the steward and jerking one shoulder (it was a habit of his). "This envelope containing 800 rubles ..."

Yakov drew the abacus toward him, cast eight beads, equalling eight hundred, and stared off into space, waiting for whatever was to follow.

"... is for the estate expenses during my absence. Understand? You're to receive 1,000 rubles rent for the mill ... am I right? You're to receive a refund of 8,000 in pledges from the public chest; the hay, of which, by your own reckoning, we can sell 7,000 poods, say at 45 kopecks, will give you 3,000 rubles; therefore, how much will you have all told? 12,000 ... am I right?"

"Yes, sir," Yakov said.

However, the quick movements of his fingers told me he wanted to object. Papa stopped him:

"Well, you'll send 10,000 to the Council for Petrovskoye out of this money. Now, as to the money that's in the office," Papa continued (Yakov scrambled the 12,000

and cast 21,000), "you'll bring it to me and set it down as laid out as of today. (Yakov scrambled the beads and turned the abacus over, to indicate, no doubt, that the 21,000 would be similarly lost.) You'll deliver this envelope with the money in it to the person named."

I was standing close to the table and glanced at the writing. It read: "For Karl Ivanych Mauer".

Apparently noticing that I had read that which I ought not know about, Papa placed his hand on my shoulder and with a slight movement turned me away from the table. I did not understand whether this was a caress or a rebuke, but just in case I kissed the large veined hand that lay on my shoulder.

"Yes, sir," Yakov said. "And what'll the orders be about the Khabarovka money?"

Khabarovka was Mamma's estate.

"Keep it in the office and don't use it for anything without my instructions."

Yakov was silent for several seconds; suddenly his fingers began moving rapidly and, his expression changing from that of stolid obedience with which he had listened to his master's orders to his natural expression of roguish shrewdness, he drew the abacus closer and began to speak:

"If I may say so, Pyotr Alexandrovich, as you please, but we can't pay the Council on time. You were pleased to say," he continued, speaking slowly, "that there's money due from the pledges, the mill and the hay ..." (In enumerating these items he cast them on the abacus.) "Well, I just hope we don't make a mistake in our reckoning," he added after a slight pause and glanced at Papa meaningfully.

"In what way?"

"If you please, have a look: as for the mill, why, the miller's been to see me twice to ask for a postponement and swears to God he has no money ... Why, he's here right now. Would you care to speak to him yourself?"

"And what does he say?" Papa asked, indicating by a movement of his head that he had no desire to speak to the miller.

"What can he say? He says there was no grinding to do

and that whatever bit of money he had he's spent on the dam. But if we turn him out, sir, will we really gain anything? As for the pledges you spoke of, if you please, why, I believe I reported to you that our money's sunk there and there's no hope of getting it back soon. I sent a load of flour to town for Ivan Afanasyevich yesterday and a note about the matter: well, he's again replied that he'd be glad to do anything he could for Pyotr Alexandrovich, but it's not up to him, and the way things look now your deposit won't even come through in two months' time. You spoke about the hay, if you please, and supposing we do get 3,000 for it ..."

He cast 3,000 and was silent for about a minute, glancing now at the abacus, now into Papa's eyes with an expression that said: "You can see for yourself how little this is! And then again, we'll lose money on the hay if we sell it now, as you surely know ..."

It was obvious that he had many more arguments in store; perhaps that was why Papa interrupted him.

"I'll not change my orders," he said, "but if there truly is a delay in the receipt of these monies, well then, you'll have to take as much as necessary from the Khabarovka account."

"Yes, sir."

Judging by Yakov's expression and fingers, this last order pleased him no end.

Yakov was a serf, a very conscientious and devoted man; like all good stewards, he was extremely thrifty in conducting his master's affairs and had the strangest notions as to what was advantageous for his master. He was forever alert to increasing the personal fortune of his master at the expense of the personal fortune of his mistress, endeavoring to prove that all the income from her estate should be used for the upkeep of Petrovskoye (the estate on which we lived). At the moment he was triumphant, for he had succeeded wonderfully in this.

After greeting us, Papa said we'd had enough of idling away our time in the country, that we were no longer infants and that it was high time we had begun to study in earnest.

"I believe you know that I'm leaving for Moscow

tonight and am taking you with me," he said. "You'll live at your grandmother's and Mamma will remain here with the girls. I want you to know that her sole comfort will be the knowledge that you are studying well and that your teachers are pleased with you."

Although the preparations that had been going on for several days had led us to expect something unusual, the news astounded us. Volodya turned red and conveyed our mother's message in an unsteady voice. "So that's what my dream meant!" I thought. "I pray nothing worse happens."

I was so very sorry for Mamma, yet the thought that we were indeed grown up flattered me. "If we're leaving today there probably won't be any lessons; how wonderful!" I said to myself. "But I am sorry for Karl Ivanych. He'll probably be dismissed, for otherwise there wouldn't be an envelope for him ... I'd rather go on studying here forever and never leave, never part with Mamma or hurt poor Karl Ivanych. He's so unfortunate as it is!" These thoughts flashed through my mind as I stood staring at the black bows of my shoes.

After exchanging a few words with Karl Ivanych about the dropping barometer and telling Yakov not to feed the dogs so that he might ride out one last time after dinner and try the young hounds, Papa, contrary to my expectations, sent us off to our lessons, consoling us, however, by promising to take us to the hunt.

On my way upstairs I darted out to the terrace. Lying by the door in the sun, eyes tightly shut, was Milka, my father's favorite borzoi.

"Milka, my dear," I said, stroking her and kissing her on the muzzle. "We're leaving today. Farewell! We'll never see each other again."

I was overcome by emotion and burst into tears.

Chapter 4

LESSONS

Karl Ivanych was in a very bad humor. This was evident from his frown and from the way he flung his frock-coat into a drawer, tied his belt angrily and drew a deep

line with his nail in the book of dialogues to mark the end of the passage we were to learn by heart. Volodya studied diligently, but I was so distressed I could do nothing at all. I stared blankly at the book of dialogues for some time and the tears that welled up in my eyes at the thought of our impending parting prevented me from reading; when it was finally time to recite to Karl Ivanych, who listened to me with half-closed eyes (this was a bad sign), and I got to the place where one person says: "*Wo kommen Sie her?*",[1] and the other replies: "*Ich komme von Kaffeehause*",[2] I could no longer contain my tears and my sobbing prevented me from saying: "*Haben Sie die Zeitung nicht gelesen?*"[3] When we proceeded to penmanship the tears falling onto the paper made such blots one would have thought I had been writing with water on wrapping paper.

Karl Ivanych became angry, sent me to kneel in the corner, said it was obstinacy, a puppet-show (this was his favorite expression), threatened me with the ruler and demanded that I apologize, when I was so choked up I could not utter a word. Finally, no doubt feeling that he had acted unjustly, he went off to Nikolai's room and slammed the door.

From the schoolroom I could hear the conversation in the valet's room.

"Have you heard that the children are going to Moscow, Nikolai?" Karl Ivanych said, entering the room.

"Of course, sir."

Nikolai must have intended to rise, for Karl Ivanych said: "Don't get up, Nikolai", and then shut the door. I left my corner and went over to the door to eavesdrop.

"No matter how good you are to people or how attached you are to them I see you can't expect any gratitude, can you, Nikolai?" Karl Ivanych was saying with feeling.

Nikolai, who sat by the window at his cobbling, nodded affirmatively.

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[1] Where do you come from?
[2] I come from the coffee house.
[3] Have you not read the newspaper?

"I have lived in this house for twelve years and as God is my witness, Nikolai," Karl Ivanych continued, raising his eyes and his snuffbox to the ceiling, "I've loved them and shown more interest in them than if they were my own children. Remember, Nikolai, when little Volodya had a fever, remember, I sat by his bed for nine days, never getting a moment's sleep. Yes! Then I was dear, kind Karl Ivanych, I was needed then; but now," he added, smiling wryly, "now *the children are grown up: they have to study in earnest now*. And aren't they studying here, Nikolai?"

"Don't see how else a body could study," Nikolai said, laying down the awl and pulling through the waxed threads with both hands.

"Yes, I'm not needed now, and I should be chased out; but where are their promises? Where is their gratitude? I admire and esteem Natalia Nikolayevna," he said, pressing his hand to his breast, "but what can she do? Her wishes in this house are no more than this," at which with an expressive gesture he flung a scrap of leather to the floor. "I know who's behind this and why I'm not wanted any more: it's because I don't flatter and don't fawn like *some people* do. I'm accustomed to speaking the truth always and to everyone," he said proudly. "Ah, well! My leaving won't make them rich and, with God's help, I'll earn my crust of bread ... Isn't that so, Nikolai?"

Nikolai raised his head and looked at Karl Ivanych as if to ascertain whether he could indeed earn his crust of bread, but said nothing.

Karl Ivanych continued on in this vein at length: he spoke of some general's family he had lived with previously that had appreciated his services much more (it pained me so to hear that), he spoke of Saxony, of his parents, of his friend, the tailor Schönheit, and so on, and so forth.

I sympathized and it grieved me to see that my father and Karl Ivanych, whom I loved almost equally, had not understood one another. I returned to the corner, sat back on my heels and wondered how I might restore peace between them.

On returning to the schoolroom, Karl Ivanych told me

to get up and take out my dictation exercise book. When all was ready he lowered himself into his armchair solemnly and in a voice that seemed to issue from some great depth began dictating the following: "*Von al-len Lei-den-schaf-ten die grau-samste ist ... haben Sie ge-schrieben?*"[1] He paused, slowly took a pinch of snuff, and continued with renewed vigor: "*Die grausamste ist die Un-dank-bar-keit ... ein grosses U.*"[2] Having written the last word, I looked up at him, expecting him to continue.

"*Punctum.*"[3] he said with a faint smile and motioned to us to hand him our exercise books.

He read the dictum which expressed his innermost thought several times over with various intonations and an expression of complete satisfaction; then he assigned us our history lesson and sat down by the window. His face was no longer morose; it expressed the satisfaction of a man who had befittingly avenged an affront.

It was a quarter to one; but Karl Ivanych, it seemed, had no intention of dismissing us: he kept assigning us ever new tasks. Boredom and hunger grew in equal proportion. I watched impatiently for the signs which indicated the approaching dinner hour. There a serving woman carrying a bast dishcloth was on her way to wash the dishes; there was the rattling of china in the pantry, the sound of the table being extended and chairs being set out; there were Mimi, Lyubochka and Katenka (Katenka was Mimi's twelve-year-old daughter) coming in from the garden; but there was no sight of Foka, the house-steward who always came up to announce dinner. Then only could we abandon our books and, oblivious of Karl Ivanych, dash downstairs.

Now footfalls could be heard on the stairs; but it was not Foka! I knew his step and always recognized the creaking of his boots. The door opened and a person I had never seen before appeared.

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[1] Of all out-ra-ges the most re-vol-ting is ... have you written it down?

[2] The most revolting is In-gra-ti-tude ... with a capital "I".

[3] Full stop.

Chapter 5

GOD'S FOOL

A man of about fifty entered the room. He had a pale, angular, pocked-marked face, long gray hair and a sparse reddish beard. He was so tall that in order to pass through the door he not only had to incline his head but to stoop. He was dressed in something ragged that resembled both a peasant coat and a cassock; he carried a huge staff. On entering the room he struck the floor with it mightily and, raising his brows and opening his mouth wide, he burst into the most frightening and unnatural laughter. He was blind in one eye and the white iris of this eye moved incessantly, making his ugly face still more repulsive.

"Aha! Caught!" he shouted and running up to Volodya with mincing steps seized his head and began examining the crown of it closely, then moved away with a perfectly serious expression, went up to the table and began blowing under the oilcloth and crossing it. "Ohh, pity! Ohh, painful! Dears ... flying away," he then said in a voice that trembled with tears, peering at Volodya compassionately and wiping the real tears that fell from his eyes with his sleeve.

His rasping voice was coarse, his movements hasty and abrupt, his speech senseless and disconnected (he never used pronouns), but his intonation was so kindly and the expression of his pallid, ugly face would at times be so woeful that listening to him one could not repress a mingled feeling of pity, sadness and fear.

This was God's fool, the wanderer Grisha.

Where was he from? Who were his parents? What had induced him to take up a life of wandering? No one knew. All I know is that ever since he was fifteen he had been known as one of God's fools, going barefoot summer and winter, visiting monasteries, presenting small icons to those he took a fancy to and uttering enigmatic words which some people regarded as prophesies, that no one had ever known him in a different condition, that he occasionally came to see my grandmother and that some

said he was the unfortunate son of rich parents and a pure soul, while others said he was just a peasant and a good-for-nothing.

At last the long-awaited and punctual Foka appeared and we went downstairs. Grisha, sobbing and speaking nonsense as before, followed us, thumping his staff on the steps. Papa and Mamma were walking arm-in-arm in the drawing-room, speaking in low tones. Marya Ivanovna sat stiffly in one of the armchairs that was placed symmetrically and at a right angle to the sofa and in a stern undertone was admonishing the girls who sat beside her. As Karl Ivanych entered the room she glanced up at him and turned away instantly, her face assuming an expression which might be interpreted to mean: I have not noticed you, Karl Ivanych. We could see by their eyes that the girls were impatient to share some very important news with us, but they could not jump up and come over to us, for that would have been a breach of etiquette, according to Mimi's rules. We first had to approach her and say: "*Bonjour*, Mimi", click our heels and only then would we be permitted to enter into conversation.

What a tiresome creature Mimi was! We could never speak of anything in her presence, for she considered everything to be indecorous. Besides, she was forever nagging us: "*Parlez donc français*" [1] just when we wanted so to chatter in Russian; or at dinner, just as I was beginning to really enjoy a dish and did not wish to be disturbed, she would be sure to say: "*Mangez donc avec du pain*" [2] or "*Comment est-ce que vous tenez votre fourchette*?" [3] "We're none of her concern!" I would say to myself. "She can teach the girls. We have Karl Ivanych to teach us." I fully shared his dislike of *some people*.

"Ask your mother to let us accompany the chase," Katenka whispered, holding me back by my jacket as the grown-ups proceeded to the dining room.

"All right, we'll try."

Grisha ate in the dining room, but at a separate little

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[1] Do speak French.
[2] Eat bread with it.
[3] How are you holding your fork?

table; he did not raise his eyes from his plate, sighed from time to time, grimaced fearfully and spoke, as though to himself: "Pity! Flown away ... Dove'll fly away to heaven ... Oh, stone on the grave!" and so on.

Mamma had been upset all morning. The presence, words and actions of Grisha had increased her anxiety noticeably.

"Oh, yes, I almost forgot to ask you about something," she said, handing my father a plate of soup.

"What is it?"

"Please tell them to lock up those terrible dogs, because they nearly tore poor Grisha to pieces as he was crossing the yard. They might very well attack the children, too."

Hearing his name mentioned, Grisha turned towards the table, held up the torn skirts of his garment and intoned as he chewed:

"Wanted to tear to pieces ... God intervened. Sinful to set dogs! Grave sin! Don't beat, master,[1] why beat? God will forgive ... Times now changed."

"What's he saying?" Papa asked, scrutinizing him sternly. "I can't understand a word."

"Well, I can," Mamma replied. "He told me a kennelman set the dogs on him intentionally, and now he's saying: 'Wanted them to tear me to pieces, but God intervened', and he asks you not to have the man punished."

"Ah! So that's it!" Papa said. "But how does he know I intend to punish the man? You know I'm not over-fond of his kind," he continued in French, "but I dislike this one especially and must ..."

"Oh, don't say that, my dear," Mamma interposed, as if frightened by something. "How do you know?"

"I'd say I've had occasion to study this breed of people, considering how many come here to see you, and they are all of a kind. It's always the same story ..."

It was obvious that my mother was of quite another opinion but did not want to argue.

"Please pass me a patty," she said. "How do you find them today?"

"Well, it angers me," Papa continued, picking up

[1] This is how he addressed all men (footnote by L. N. Tolstoy).

a patty but holding it at such a distance that Mamma could not reach it. "Well, it angers me when I see sensible, educated people being hoodwinked."

And he struck the table with his fork.

"I asked you to pass me a patty," she repeated, holding out her hand.

"And they do well," Papa continued, drawing his hand back, "when they put such folk in prison. The only effect they have is to shatter the already weak nerves of some people," he added with a smile, seeing how disagreeable the conversation was to Mamma, and handed her the patty.

"All I can say to this is: it's difficult to believe that a man who, though he is sixty, goes barefoot summer and winter, never takes off the heavy iron chains he wears under his clothing and who has time and again refused all offers of leading a peaceful, comfortable life, it's difficult to believe that such a man would do all this simply because he is lazy. As for the prophecies," she paused and added with a sigh, "*je suis payée pour y croire.*[1] I believe I told you how Kiryusha foretold the very day and hour of his death to my departed father."

"Ah, what have you done to me!" Papa said, smiling and cupping his hand to his mouth on the side closer to Mimi. (Whenever he did this I always sat up, expecting something funny.) "Why did you remind me of his feet? I've looked at them and now I can't eat."

Dinner was drawing to an end. Lyubochka and Katenka kept winking at us, fidgeting and expressing extreme impatience. The winking meant: "Why don't you ask Papa to let us accompany the chase?" I nudged Volodya, Volodya nudged me and at last ventured to speak; at first timidly, but then more firmly and loudly he explained that as we were leaving that evening we wished the girls to accompany us to the chase in the *lineika.*[2] After a short discussion among the grown-ups the question was decided in our favor and, what was still more agreeable, Mamma said she would come along, too.

[1] I have good cause to believe in them.

[2] *Lineika*—a long, open vehicle with a lengthwise bench down the middle.—*Tr.*

Chapter 6

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HUNT

Yakov was called in during dessert and instructed as to the *lineika*, the hounds and the saddle horses, all in the greatest detail, with each horse mentioned by name. Volodya's horse was lame; Papa ordered a hunter to be saddled for him. The word "hunter" had a strange ring in Mamma's ears; it seemed to her that a hunter must be something akin to a wild beast that would certainly bolt and kill Volodya. Despite the assurances of Papa and Volodya, who said with surprising bravado that it was nothing to worry about and that he truly liked a horse that bolted, poor Mamma protested that the outing would be torture to her.

Dinner was over. The grown-ups went to the library for coffee and we ran out into the garden to kick up the fallen yellow leaves that covered the paths and to talk. We spoke of Volodya's riding a hunter, of it being shameful that Lyubochka could not run as fast as Katenka, of how interesting it would be to see Grisha's chains, and so on, but not a word was said of our parting. Our conversation was interrupted by the clatter of the approaching *lineika*, which had a serving boy perched at each corner. The huntsman, his helpers and hounds followed behind. Ignat, the driver, astride the horse Volodya was to ride, led my horse and brought up the rear. At first, we all ran to the fence through which we could see all these interesting things and then, shrieking and stamping, we raced upstairs to dress, and in such a way as to resemble hunters as closely as possible. One of the principal ways of achieving this was to tuck our pantaloons into our high boots. We set to it hastily, to have done with it as quickly as possible and then to run down to the porch to enjoy the sight of the hounds and the horses and to chat with the hunt servants.

It was a hot day. White, fantastically-shaped little clouds had appeared on the horizon that morning; a breeze had since been herding them closer and closer together so that at times they obscured the sun. But

though the clouds drifted and darkened, they were evidently not fated to gather into a storm and spoil our pleasure this last time. Towards evening they began drifting apart again: some paled, became elongated and raced towards the horizon; others, directly overhead, turned into transparent white fleece, and only one large black cloud seemed stationary in the east. Karl Ivanych always knew the direction a cloud would take. He declared that this cloud would drift towards Maslovka, that there would be no rain and that the weather would be fine.

Foka, despite his advanced age, ran down the porch steps nimbly, shouted: "Drive up!" and, feet planted firmly apart, took his stand in the middle of the drive between the place the groom was to bring up the *lineika* and the steps in the attitude of a man who does not have to be reminded of his duties. The ladies came down and after a brief discussion as to who was to sit on which side and hold on to whom (although I believe there was no need to hold on at all), they took their seats, opened their parasols and drove off. As the *lineika* began to move Mamma, pointing to the hunter, asked the groom in a trembling voice:

"Is this Vladimir Petrovich's horse?"

And when the groom replied in the affirmative she dropped her hand and turned away. I was terribly impatient: I mounted my horse, looked out between its ears and circled about the yard.

"Don't trample the hounds, if you please," one of the huntsman's helpers said to me.

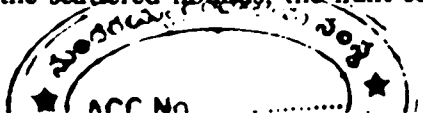
"Don't worry, I've hunted before," I replied haughtily.

Volodya mounted the hunter and despite his firm will, inquired several times and not without a tremor as he patted it:

"Is she gentle?"

He sat well in the saddle, just like a grown man. His sharply-defined thighs lay against the saddle flaps so perfectly it made me envious, especially since, as far as I could judge by my shadow, my appearance was much less imposing.

Papa's steps were heard on the stairs. The whipper-in rounded up the scattered hounds, the hunt servants called



to the borzois and began mounting their horses. The groom brought Papa's horse up to the porch. The hounds of Papa's pack that had been lying around in picturesque poses near the horse now dashed towards him. Milka trotted out of the house behind him in high spirits, the metal disk of her beaded collar jingling. She always greeted the pack on emerging: playing with some, sniffing and growling at others and searching out fleas in still others.

Papa mounted his horse and we set out.

Chapter 7

THE HUNT

The kennelman, nicknamed Turka, astride a light-gray, hump-nosed horse and wearing a shaggy fur hat with a huge horn slung over his shoulder and a hunting knife at his belt, rode on ahead. His ferocious appearance suggested he was on his way to battle and not to a chase. The close-knit pack rolled on like a motley, undulating mass at the horse's hind legs. It was pitiful to see the fate that befell an unfortunate hound that had taken it into its head to drop behind. It had to exert all its will to pull its brace-mate back and when it did one of the whippers-in, riding behind, would be sure to lash it, exclaiming: "Join the pack!" Once out of the gate, Papa ordered the hunt servants and us to keep to the road, while he turned off into the field of rye.

It was the height of the harvesting season. The vast, brilliant yellow field was bordered on one side by a tall, blue-green forest which at the time seemed to me the most distant and mysterious of places, beyond which the world either ended or there lay uninhabited lands. The field was dotted with shocks and reapers. Here and there in the dense rye the bent back of a woman reaping could be seen on a cut row, the flash of the ears when she twisted them or a woman bending over a cradle in the shade and the scattered sheaves on the stubble, alive with cornflowers. On the other side men in long shirts stood on the wagons

stacking the shocks and raising dust in the hot, dry field. The village elder, wearing boots and with a rough cloth coat over his shoulders and holding a handful of tallies, noticed Papa from afar. Removing his coarse felt hat, he wiped his red beard and head with a towel and shouted at the women. Papa's bay cantered playfully, nodding her head now and then, pulling at the reins and swishing off the flies and gadflies that swarmed above her with her bushy tail. Two borzois, tails raised sickle-wise and stepping high, sailed across the high stubble in the horse's wake. Milka ran on ahead, neck arched in expectation of the quarry. The sound of people talking, of horses' hooves and wagons, the joyous whistling of quail, the hum of insects which hovered in the air in swarms, the odor of wormwood, straw and horses' sweat, the thousand different shades and colors cast by the scorching sun upon the light-yellow stubble, the distant blue of the forest, the pale lilac clouds and the gossamer cobwebs which floated in the air or settled on the stubble, all this I saw, and heard, and felt.

On reaching Kalinov Wood we found the *lineika* already there and, beyond all expectations, a one-horse cart with the butler perched in the middle of it. I glimpsed under the straw a samovar, the wooden tub of the ice cream freezer and several fascinating little packets and boxes. There could be no mistake: we would have tea out-of-doors with ice cream and fruit. We shouted for joy at the sight of the cart, for it was a great treat to have tea on the grass in the woods, in a place where no one ever had tea.

Turka rode up to the running ground, stopped, listened attentively to Papa's detailed instructions as to where to line up and where to come out (which instructions, incidentally, he never followed, but did as he pleased), slipped the dogs' collars, slowly tied the leads to his saddle ring, remounted and soon disappeared, whistling, beyond the young birches. The dogs, released from their braces, first expressed their joy by wagging their tails, then shook themselves, pulled themselves together and fanned out, running briskly, muzzles to the ground and feathering with their sterns.

"Do you have a handkerchief?" Papa asked.

I took it from my pocket and held it up.

"Well, then, tie it around the gray dog's neck."

"You mean Jiran?" I said with a knowing air.

"Yes, and keep to the road. When you reach the clearing, stop. And don't come back without a hare!"

I collared Jiran's shaggy neck with my handkerchief and raced off towards the appointed spot. Papa laughed and called after me: "Hurry, hurry, or you'll be too late!"

Jiran kept stopping, pricking up his ears and listening to the cheers of the huntsman and the whippers-in. I was not strong enough to drag him along and would begin to shout: "Holloa! Holloa!" Then Jiran would pull so hard I was scarcely able to hold him back and fell several times before reaching the clearing. Choosing a level, shady spot at the foot of a tall oak, I lay down on the grass, made Jiran sit beside me and began to wait. My imagination, as is often the case at such a time, took me far ahead of reality: I imagined that I was routing the third hare when the first hound was heard in the woods. Turka's voice sounded louder and more animated; the hound yelped, its voice rising ever more frequently; it was soon joined by another, deeper one, then a third and a fourth ... The baying died down only to be resumed in chorus again. The sounds were getting louder and more continuous, until at last they blended into a ringing, high-pitched din. *The hounds bayed as they ran the hare down.*

Hearing this, I stiffened at my post. With my eyes glued to the edge of the wood, I smiled foolishly; I was perspiring profusely and though the drops ran down my chin and tickled me I did not wipe them away. I felt that this was the decisive moment. This strained condition was too unnatural for it to last long. The hounds now bayed at the very edge of the wood, now gradually receded. There was no hare in sight. I began looking around. Jiran had shared my condition: at first he had strained and yelped, then he lay down beside me, dropped his muzzle on my lap and relaxed.

Ants swarmed about the bare roots of the oak beneath which I sat, over the dry gray ground, among the dry oak leaves, acorns, brittle moss-covered twigs, yellow-green

moss and the sparse spikes of green grass. One after another they hurried along their well-worn paths: some carrying loads, others without. I picked up a twig and blocked their path. It was curious to see the way some, disdaining danger, crawled under it, while others climbed over it; some, particularly those that carried loads, seemed quite bewildered and did not know what to do: they stopped, looked for a detour or turned back, or climbed the twig until they reached my hand and seemed intent on crawling up my jacket sleeve. I was distracted from these interesting observations by a yellow butterfly that flitted before my face enticingly. The moment I transferred my attention to it, it flew off a bit, fluttered over a half-dead blossom of white clover and settled on it. I do not know whether it was the sun warming it or whether it was sipping nectar from the blossom, but I could tell it was content. Every now and then it would move its wings and press against the blossom until at last it became motionless. I rested my chin on my hands and watched it with delight.

Suddenly Jiran yelped and jerked so hard I almost tumbled over. I looked around. There at the edge of the wood with one ear up and the other ear down was a bounding hare. The blood rushed to my head and I forgot about everything else at that moment. I shouted wildly, let the dog go and ran after it. But scarcely had I done so than I began to regret it sorely: the hare crouched, leaped, and that was the last I saw of it.

Imagine my mortification when, following the hounds that came bounding and barking out of the woods, Turka appeared from behind the bushes! He had seen my mistake (which was that I had been *impatient*) and casting a contemptuous glance at me merely said: "Ah, sir!" But one should have heard the way he said it! I would rather he had hung me from his saddle like a hare.

I stood there in anguish for quite some time, not calling to my dog but repeating over and over again as I slapped my thighs:

"Oh, Lord! What have I done?"

I heard the hounds ranging again, the men holloaing at

the far edge of the running ground, the hare routed and Turka blowing his huge horn, summoning the dogs, but still I stood rooted to the spot...

Chapter 6

GAMES

The chase was over. A carpet was spread in the shade of the young birches and the entire party sat in a circle on it. The butler Gavrila, having trodden down the lush green grass all about him, was polishing the plates and taking leaf-wrapped plums and peaches from a little box. The sun was shining through the green branches of the young birches, casting round, quivering spots on the patterned carpet, on my legs and even on Gavrila's perspiring bald head. A light breeze passing through the leaves of the trees, over my hair and perspiring face refreshed me wonderfully.

When we had had our share of ice cream and fruit there was nothing more for us to do on the carpet and so, despite the slanting, scorching rays of the sun, we rose and went off to play.

"What'll we play?" Lyubochka asked, squinting in the sun as she hopped across the grass. "Let's play Robinson."

"No... That's too dull," Volodya said, slumping lazily onto the grass and chewing on a leaf. "Robinson is all you ever want to play. If you insist, then let's make an arbor."

Volodya was obviously putting on airs: he was no doubt proud of having ridden a hunter and pretended to be very tired. Or perhaps even at that age he had too much common sense and too little imagination to really throw himself into playing Robinson. The game consisted of acting out scenes from *The Swiss Family Robinson* which we had read shortly before.

"Oh, please... Why don't you want to please us?" the girls persisted. "You can be Charles or Ernest, or the father, whichever you wish," Katenka said, trying to pull

him up from the ground by the sleeve of his jacket.

"Truly, I don't want to. It's boring," Volodya said, stretching and smiling smugly.

"We might just as well have stayed at home, since no one wants to play," Lyubochka said tearfully.

She was a dreadful cry-baby.

"All right, come on; but please stop bawling. I can't stand it!"

However, Volodya's condescention gave us very little pleasure; on the contrary, his lazy, weary look destroyed the enchantment of the game. When we sat on the ground, pretending we were going fishing, and rowed with all our might, Volodya sat with his hands in his lap in an attitude that did not in the least resemble that of a fisherman. I called his attention to it, but he said that we would neither gain nor lose anything by flinging our arms about more or less and would certainly not get very far. I could not help agreeing with him. When, pretending to go hunting, I shouldered a stick and set off into the wood, Volodya stretched out on his back, crossed his arms under his head and said he had gone off hunting, too. Such words and actions had a damping effect on the game and were extremely unpleasant, especially since I could not privately but agree that Volodya was acting sensibly.

I knew one could not shoot a bird with a stick or even fire at it. It was a game. If one were to reason like that one could never ride a chair, either. I think Volodya recalled only too well our covering an armchair with shawls to make a carriage on long winter evenings, with one of us as the coachman, the other as the footman, the girls in the middle, three chairs for a troika and we would be off on a journey. What adventures we had on the way! And how quickly and merrily the winter evenings passed! If one were never to pretend, there would be no games. And if there were no games, what would remain?

Chapter 9

PUPPY LOVE

Pretending that she was picking some sort of South American fruit from a tree, Lyubochka plucked off a leaf on which there was a huge caterpillar, dropped it in horror, threw up her hands and sprang back as though she were afraid something would squirt out of it. The game was suspended. We all bent over, heads close together, to have a look at this curiosity.

I looked over Katenka's shoulder as she tried to pick up the caterpillar on a leaf she kept placing in its way.

I had noticed that many girls were in the habit of twitching their shoulders in an attempt to adjust their frocks which, being low-necked, had slipped off their shoulders. I also recall that Mimi was always annoyed by this and would say: *C'est un geste de femme de chambre.*[1] Bending over the caterpillar, Katenka moved her shoulders in this manner and at that very moment the wind raised her kerchief from her dainty white neck. Her small shoulder was just an inch from my lips. I was no longer watching the caterpillar but staring fixedly and then kissed Katenka's shoulder soundly. She did not turn around, yet I noticed that her neck and ears became red. Volodya spoke scornfully without raising his head:

"Such tenderness, indeed!"

By now I had tears in my eyes.

I did not take my eyes off Katenka. I had long since become accustomed to her fair, rosy face and had always liked it. Now I observed it more closely and liked it still more. When we rejoined the grownups Papa, to our infinite joy, announced that at Mamma's request our departure had been put off until the following morning.

We rode back beside the *lineika*. Volodya and I, trying to outdo one another in horsemanship and daring, caracoled alongside. My shadow was longer than before and judging by it I imagined I had the appearance of a rather fine horseman; however, the feeling of self-satisfaction

[1] It's the gesture of a chambermaid.

which I experienced was soon shattered by the following incident. Hoping to completely captivate everyone in the *lineika*, I fell back somewhat and then, using my crop and heels, set my horse off at a gallop, assumed a graceful attitude and was about to fly by them on the side where Katenka sat. I had not yet decided which was better: to gallop by in silence or with a shout? But the insufferable horse, drawing abreast of the cart horses and despite my every effort, came to a stop so abruptly that I was thrown from the saddle onto its neck and almost tumbled off.

Chapter 10

WHAT SORT OF A MAN WAS MY FATHER?

He was a man of the past century and possessed that elusive character, common to the young men of that century, of chivalry, enterprise, self-confidence, gallantry and debauchery. He regarded the people of our day with scorn, and this opinion had its source both in his innate pride and in his secret annoyance at not being able in our time to enjoy either the influence or the success he had in his own. His two great passions in life were cards and women; in the course of his life he won several millions and had affairs with innumerable women of all classes.

Tall and well-built, with a strange, tripping gait, a habit of jerking one shoulder, with small, perpetually smiling eyes, a large, prominent nose, irregular lips which had an awkward but pleasing line, a lisping speech and a large bald pate: such was my father's appearance for as far back as I can remember, an appearance which neither prevented him from being known as and actually being a man *à bonnes fortunes*,[1] nor, moreover, from being liked by one and all, by people of every class and position, and especially by those whom he wished to like him.

He knew how to gain the upper hand in all his dealings.

[1] A ladies' man.

Never having been a man of *the very highest society*, he had always associated with people of this society and in such a way as to be esteemed by them. He knew the exact degree of pride and self-assurance which, while not offending others, elevated him in the eyes of society. He was original, but not always so, and put originality to use as a means that in some instances substituted for rank or wealth. Nothing in the world could surprise him: no matter how brilliant the position in which he found himself, he seemed to have been born to it. He was so adept at concealing from others and putting away from himself the dark side of life, full of the small annoyances and disappointments known to all, that one could not but envy him. He was a connoisseur of all things which provided comfort and enjoyment and knew how to make the most of them. His trumps were his excellent connections, which he had acquired in part among my mother's relations and in part among the companions of his youth at whom he was secretly piqued for having risen so in rank, while he had forever remained a retired lieutenant of the guards. Like all retired officers he did not know how to dress fashionably; however, he dressed with originality and taste. He always wore light, loose-fitting clothes, excellent linen, large turned-up cuffs and turned-down collars ... Indeed, anything became his noble stature, powerful build, bald head and calm, self-assured movements. He was sentimental and easily moved to tears. Often, when reading aloud, on coming to a moving passage, his voice would falter, tears would well up in his eyes and he would lay the book aside in annoyance. He was fond of music and, accompanying himself on the piano, sang the love songs written by his friend A..., Gypsy songs and some operatic airs, but did not care for classical music and, disregarding popular opinion, said frankly that Beethoven's sonatas bored him and put him to sleep and that he knew of nothing better than "Don't Awaken a Young Maiden", as sung by Semyonova, and "I'm Not Alone", as the Gypsy Tanyusha sang it. His was one of those natures which needs an audience to be at its best. And he only considered that to be good which was held to be good in fashionable society. Had he any moral convictions? God

knows. His life was so full of distractions that he never had time to form any and, besides, he was so fortunate in life that he saw no need to do so.

In his old age he evolved a set view of things and immutable rules, but these were founded on a practical basis: those actions and that way of life which afforded him happiness or pleasure he considered to be good and believed that everyone should always act thus. He spoke eloquently, and this ability, I believe, increased the flexibility of his rules: he could describe one and the same action as a charming bit of naughtiness or as the blackest villainy.

Chapter 11

IN THE STUDY AND THE DRAWING ROOM

It was growing dark by the time we returned home. Mamma sat down at the piano and we children brought in paper, pencils and paints and made ourselves comfortable at the round table. All I had was some blue paint; however, I intended to draw the chase. Having soon painted a blue boy astride a blue horse and some blue dogs as well, I did not know for certain whether one might draw a blue hare and ran off to the study to consult Papa. Papa was reading, and in reply to my question: "Are there blue hares?" replied without raising his eyes: "Yes, my boy, there are." Returning to the round table, I painted a blue hare, then decided to change the blue hare into a bush. I was not pleased by the bush, either; I changed it into a tree, the tree into a haystack, the haystack into a cloud and, in the end, made such a blue mess on the sheet of paper that I tore it up in a pique and went off to nap in the wing chair.

Mamma was playing Field's Second Concerto. He had been her music teacher. I dozed and bright, limpid memories arose in my mind. She began playing Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique*, and my thoughts became gloomy, sad and oppressive. Mamma often played those

two pieces; that is why I recall so vividly the emotions they aroused in me. These emotions were like recollections; but recollections of what? It seemed I was recalling that which had never been.

The door to the study was opposite, and I saw Yakov and some bearded men in peasant coats enter. The door was immediately shut behind them. "Well, business has begun!" I said to myself. It seemed to me that nothing in the world could be more important than the business that was transacted in the study; this conviction was strengthened by the fact that everyone usually approached the study door on tiptoe and spoke in a whisper; coming from within, however, was Papa's loud voice and the aroma of cigar smoke which always, I know not why, intrigued me. Still half-asleep, I was suddenly alerted by a familiar creaking of boots in the butler's room. Karl Ivanych, on tiptoe, but with a dark and determined countenance and holding a slip of paper in his hand, approached the door and knocked lightly. He was admitted and the door was shut again.

"I hope nothing dreadful happens," I said to myself. "Karl Ivanych is angry; he's liable to do anything..."

I dozed off again.

However, no disaster occurred. An hour later I was awakened by the same creaking of boots. Karl Ivanych emerged and, wiping away the tears on his cheeks with his handkerchief and mumbling under his breath, went upstairs. Papa followed him out and came into the drawing room.

"D'you know what I've just decided?" he said in a cheerful voice, placing a hand on Mamma's shoulder.

"What, my dear?"

"I am taking Karl Ivanych along with the children. There's room enough in the britzka. They're attached to him, and I believe he is truly fond of them, and seven hundred rubles a year won't make any difference to us, *et puis au fond c'est un très bon diable*." [1]

I could not for the life of me understand why Papa was scolding Karl Ivanych.

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[1] And then, actually, he's not a bad devil.

"I'm very happy," Mamma said, "both for the children's sake and for his: he's a dear old man."

"You should have seen how touched he was when I told him to keep the five hundred rubles as a gift ... but what's most amusing is the bill he presented to me. It's worth looking at," he added with a smile, proffering a note written in Karl Ivanych's hand. "It's delightful!"

This is what was written in the note:

For childs two fish rods – 70 kopek.
Color paper, golden border, glu and cartbord for box, in gifts – 6 r. 55 k.
Book and shooting bow, gift for childs – 8 r. 16 k.
Pantaloon for Nikolai – 4 ruble.
Gold watch, cost of 140 ruble promised from Pyotr Alexandrovich from Moscow in 18 ...
Total to be reseeved by Karl Mauer, beside salary – 159 ruble 79 kopek.

One might think, on reading this note, in which Karl Ivanych demanded payment for everything he had ever spent on gifts and even that he be paid for a gift promised to him, that he was simply a heartless, mercenary man, and one would be mistaken.

On entering the study, note in hand and a prepared speech in his head, he intended to give Papa an eloquent account of all the injustices he had suffered in our house; but when he began to speak in the same kindly voice and with the same tender intonations as when he dictated to us, he himself was most affected by his own eloquence, so that coming to the part where he was to say: "and though it will be very hard for me to part with the children", he became confused, his voice broke and he was forced to take his checkered handkerchief from his pocket.

"Yes, Pyotr Alexandrovich," he said, speaking through his tears (there was nothing of this in his prepared speech), "I'm so attached to the children I don't know what I shall do without them. I'd rather serve you without a salary," he added, wiping away his tears with one hand

and proffering the bill with the other.

I am quite certain that Karl Ivanych was speaking in all sincerity at that moment, for I know how kind-hearted he was, but I cannot fathom how to reconcile the bill with his words.

"If it makes you sad, it will make me sadder still to part with you," Papa said, patting him on the back. "I've just changed my mind."

Grisha entered the room shortly before supper. He had not stopped sighing and weeping from the moment he had set foot in our house, which in the opinion of those who believed in his ability to predict the future was a sure sign that some misfortune was to befall our family. He began to take leave of us, saying he would start on his way the following morning. I winked at Volodya and slipped out of the room.

"What is it?"

"If you want to see Grisha's chains let's go up to the men-servants' quarters. Grisha's in the second room. We can hide in the storeroom and see everything."

"Excellent! Wait here: I'll call the girls."

The girls came running out, and we all went upstairs. After a brief argument as to who was to enter the dark storeroom first, we sat down to wait.

Chapter 12

GRISHA

We were terrified by the dark; we huddled together and did not speak. Grisha entered softly a moment later. In one hand he carried his staff and in the other a tallow candle in a brass candlestick. We dared not breathe.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ! Holy Mother of God! In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost..." drawing his breath in, he repeated this with various intonations and abbreviations common only to those who repeat these words often.

Still praying, he set his staff in a corner, examined the bed and began to undress. After untying his old black sash, he slowly removed his tattered nankeen coat, folded it carefully and laid it over the back of the chair. His face no longer had its usual expression of haste and doltishness. On the contrary, he was composed, pensive and even dignified. His movements were unhurried and deliberate.

When he was in his underclothes he slowly sat down on the bed, made the sign of the cross at its four corners and shifted the chains under his shirt with an effort, for we could see him wince. After sitting still for a while and carefully examining the rips in his underclothes, he rose and, praying, lifted the candle level with the icon frame in which were several icons, crossed himself and turned the candle upside-down. It crackled and went out.

The three-quarters moon shone in through the windows which looked out towards the forest. The long white figure of the simpleton was lit up on one side only by pale, silvery moonbeams and on the other its shadow, together with the shadows cast by the window frames, fell across the floor and wall, reaching up to the ceiling. Without, the watchman was striking his iron slate.

Clasping his huge hands in prayer, head bowed and sighing deeply again and again, Grisha stood in silence before the icons, then sank heavily to his knees and began to pray.

At first, he said the well-known prayers softly, stressing some of the words, then repeated them, but more loudly and animatedly. He began composing his own prayer, making an obvious effort to use Old Slavonic words. His prayer was awkward but touching. He prayed for all his benefactors (as he called all who received him, including my mother and us), he prayed for himself, asking God to forgive him his grievous sins, saying: "Lord, forgive my enemies!", rose with a groan and, repeating the same words over and over, prostrated himself and rose again, despite the weight of his chains which clanked each time they hit the floor.

[1] Thus marking the hours of the night.– *Tr.*

Volodya pinched my leg hard, but I did not even turn. I merely rubbed the spot and continued to follow Grisha's movements and words with childish awe, pity and reverence.

Instead of the fun and laughter I had anticipated on entering the storeroom I was trembling and my heart felt faint.

Grisha remained in this state of religious ecstasy for quite some time, improvising prayers all the while. Now he would repeat: "Lord, have mercy", several times in a row, though each time with new force and expression; or he would say: "Forgive me, Lord. Teach me what to do, Lord ... Teach me what to do, Lord!" as if he expected an immediate reply; or else we heard nothing but his pitiful sobbing ... He rose up on his knees, clasped his hands and fell silent.

I stuck my head out of the door cautiously and held my breath. Grisha did not move; deep sighs escaped his breast; a tear, lit up by the moon, stood in his cloudy blind eye.

"Thy will be done!" he suddenly cried with great fervor, fell face-down on the floor and sobbed loudly, like a child.

Much time has elapsed since then, many remembrances of the past have lost their significance, becoming but confused dreams, and even the wanderer Grisha has long since completed his last journey, but the impression he made on me and the feeling he evoked will never fade in my memory.

O great Christian Grisha! Your faith was so strong you felt the nearness of God, your love was so great words poured forth from your lips of their own accord, you did not compose them in your mind ... And what lofty praise you offered to His glory when, at a loss for words, you fell to the floor in tears!

The emotion with which I listened to Grisha could not last long, firstly, because my curiosity had been satisfied and, secondly, because my legs had gone to sleep from sitting still so long, and I wanted to join in the general whispering and fussing I could hear in the dark storeroom behind me. Someone took my hand and whispered:

"Whose hand is this?" It was pitch-dark in the storeroom, but the touch and the voice whispering in my ear told me it was Katenka.

Unthinkingly, I caught her bare arm below the short sleeve and pressed my lips to it. Katenka must have been surprised and jerked her hand away. The movement upset a broken chair that was in the storeroom. Grisha raised his head, looked around slowly and, still praying, began making the sign of the cross at the four corners of the room. We scampered out of the storeroom noisily, talking in whispers.

Chapter 13

NATALIA SAVISHNA

Halfway into the last century a barefoot but jolly, plump and red-cheeked wench named *Natashka* ran about in Khabarovka Village dressed in a coarse linen shift. The merits and a request of her father, the clarinetist Savva, induced my grandfather to take her *upstairs* to be one of my grandmother's maids. *Natashka* the maid proved to be meek and conscientious. When my mother was born and a nursemaid was required this duty was conferred upon *Natashka*. In this new role she earned praise and rewards for her efforts, fidelity and devotion to the young mistress. However, the powdered head and buckled shoes of the smart young butler Foka, whose duties often brought him into contact with Natalia, won her simple but loving heart. She worked up the courage to go to Grandfather and ask for permission to marry Foka. Grandfather regarded her wish as ingratitude, flew into a rage and exiled poor Natalia to the cowshed of one of his steppe villages as punishment. Six months later, however, as no one could be found to replace Natalia, she was brought back to the house and reinstated in her former position. On returning from exile in an old linen shift, she appeared before Grandfather, fell to her knees and begged him to restore her to his good graces and affection and to forget

the folly which had possessed her and which, she swore, would never return. Indeed, she remained true to her word.

From then on Natashka began to be called Natalia Savishna and took to wearing a cap. She transferred the whole store of her love to her young mistress.

When a governess replaced her at my mother's side she was given the keys to the pantry and the household linen and provisions were entrusted to her. She carried out her new duties with the same devotion and zeal as before. She became immersed in the master's property, imagining waste, damage and pilfering everywhere, and did her utmost to counteract them.

When Mamma married, wishing in some way to reward Natalia Savishna for her twenty years of faithful service and devotion, she called her in and, expressing in the most flattering words her immense gratitude and love, handed her a sheet of officially stamped paper which was Natalia Savishna's letter of enfranchisement, and said that regardless of whether or not she remained in the service of our family she would always receive a pension of 300 rubles a year. Natalia Savishna listened to all this in silence, then, taking the paper, glanced at it angrily, muttered something under her breath and rushed out of the room, slamming the door behind her. At a loss to understand the reason for such strange behavior, Mamma waited a few moments and then went to Natalia Savishna's room. She was sitting on a chest, her eyes red with weeping, worrying her handkerchief and staring at the torn bits of the document which lay scattered at her feet on the floor.

"What's the matter, my dear Natalia Savishna?" Mamma asked, taking her hand.

"Nothing, m'am," she replied. "I must have done something to displease you, since you're turning me out ... Well, I'll go."

She pulled her hand away and, scarcely able to contain her tears, was about to leave the room. Mamma restrained her, embraced her, and they both burst into tears.

For as far back as I can remember I remember Natalia Savishna, her love and kindness, but only now have

I come to appreciate it. At the time it never occurred to me that this little old woman was a rare, an extraordinary being. Not only did she never speak, but never thought, I believe, of herself: her entire life was one of love and self-sacrifice. I was so accustomed to her selfless, tender love for us that I could not imagine it could have been otherwise, was *not in the least bit grateful to her* and never asked myself: indeed, is she happy? Is she content?

There were times when, using a very natural excuse to leave the lesson, I would escape to her room, sit down and begin to daydream aloud, never feeling self-conscious in her presence. She was always busy: either knitting a stocking or rummaging in the chests which filled her room, or counting the linen while she listened to the nonsense I was talking. "So when I'm a general I'll marry a great beauty, buy myself a chestnut horse, build a crystal house and send for Karl Ivanych's relatives from Saxony" and so on, and she would say: "Yes, my dear sir, yes." Usually, when I rose to leave, she would open the light-blue chest which, as I recall, had a colored picture of a hussar, a picture from a jar of pomatum and one of Volodya's drawings pasted on the inside of the lid, take out a pastille, light it and, waving it about, would say:

"This, my dear sir, is still one of the Ochakovo pastilles. When your late grandfather, God rest his soul, fought the Turks, why, he brought it back from there. This is the last piece left," she would add with a sigh.

The chests which filled her room contained everything under the sun. No matter what was wanted, someone would usually suggest: "Ask Natalia Savishna." Indeed, after rummaging about a bit she would find the required article and say: "It's a good thing I put it away." The chests contained thousands of such items of which no one in the house but she knew or cared about.

Once I grew very angry at her. This is how it came about. When pouring myself some kvas at dinner I dropped the decanter and spilled the kvas on the tablecloth.

"Call Natalia Savishna in so she can see what her pet has done," Mamma said.

Natalia Savishna entered and, seeing the puddle I had

made, shook her head; then Mamma whispered something to her and she left the room, shaking her finger at me.

After dinner I set off for the salon, skipping along in the best of spirits when Natalia Savishna suddenly pounced from behind the door, tablecloth in hand, caught hold of me and, despite my frantic struggles, rubbed the wet cloth against my face, saying: "Don't you dare stain the tablecloths, don't you dare stain the tablecloths!" I was so offended I began to bawl from sheer rage.

"Indeed!" I said to myself, pacing up and down in the salon, choking on my tears. "Natalia Savishna, that old Natalia, addressed me so *familiarly* and slapped my face with the wet cloth as if I were a stable boy. How horrible!"

When Natalia Savishna saw me bawling like a baby she ran off, while I, still pacing up and down, plotted my revenge against the impudent *Natalia* for the insult I had suffered.

A few minutes later Natalia Savishna returned, came up to me hesitantly and said in a soothing voice:

"Come now, sir, don't cry ... Forgive an old fool ... I'm so sorry ... Do forgive me, my dear sir ... Here, this is for you."

From under her shawl she took a cornet of red paper that contained two hard candies and a dried fig and handed it to me with a trembling hand. I did not have the courage to look the kind old woman in the face. Turning away, I accepted the gift and my tears flowed afresh, but now these were tears of love and shame, not rage.

Chapter 14

PARTING

Towards noon of the day following the above events the calash and the britzka were drawn up at the porch. Nikolai was dressed for the journey, that is to say, his trousers were tucked into his boots and his old frock-coat

was belted tightly with a sash. He stood in the britzka, packing coats and cushions for a seat; when it seemed too high to him he would sit on the cushions and bounce up and down to flatten them.

"Would you be kind enough to take the master's box, too, Nikolai Dmitrich?" Papa's valet said breathlessly, emerging from the calash. "It's very small."

"You should've said so before, Mikhei Ivanych," Nikolai snapped, flinging a bundle to the bottom of the britzka. "By God, my head's in a whirl as it is without you giving me any more boxes," he added, raising his cap and wiping large beads of sweat from his sunburned brow.

The menials, the men dressed in coats, caftans, long shirts and bareheaded, the women in coarse linen dresses and striped kerchiefs and holding infants in their arms, and barefoot children stood by the porch, surveying the vehicles and talking among themselves. One of the coachmen, a bent, middle-aged man wearing a winter fur hat and a peasant's overcoat, was holding one of the calash shafts, tapping it and watching the shaft move with a thoughtful expression; the other, a handsome young fellow in a long white shirt with red fustian gussets and a round black felt hat which he tilted now over one ear, now over the other as he scratched his curly blond head, laid his overcoat on the box, threw the reins there, too, flicked his short braided whip and glanced now at his boots, now at the drivers who were greasing the britzka. One, straining hard, was holding up the front; the other, bent over a wheel, was greasing the axle and hub and, so as not to waste the grease on the stick, smeared it on the rim of the wheel with an upward stroke. The unmatched, overworked post horses stood by the fence, swishing away flies with their tails. Some, having planted their shaggy, swollen legs apart, had shut their eyes and were dozing; the others seemed bored and rubbed against each other or nibbled at the fronds of the rough, dark-green ferns which grew by the porch. There were several borzois. A few lay panting in the sun, while some others moved about in the shade under the calash and britzka, licking the grease off the axles. A dusty haze hung in the air, the horizon was

a purplish-gray, but there was not a single cloud in the sky. A strong west wind was raising columns of dust on the road and fields, bending the tops of the tall lindens and birches in the garden and carrying off the fallen yellow leaves. I sat by the window waiting impatiently for the preparations to end.

When the family had assembled at the round table in the drawing room to spend a last few minutes together I could not imagine what a sad moment awaited us. The most trivial thoughts filled my head. I wondered which coachman would drive the britzka and which would drive the calash. Who would ride with Papa and who would ride with Karl Ivanych? And why did they insist on bundling me up in a scarf and quilted jacket?

"I'm not a mollycoddle. I won't freeze to death. When will all this end? I wish we were seated and on our way."

"Who should I give the list of children's linen to?" Natalia Savishna who had just entered, her eyes red-rimmed and holding out a slip of paper, asked Mamma.

"Give it to Nikolai and then come to say goodbye to the children."

The old woman wanted to say something but suddenly stopped short, covered her face with the corner of her shawl and with a wave of her hand left the room. It wrenched my heart to see that gesture; but my impatience to start out was greater than this emotion and I continued to listen quite indifferently to my parents' conversation. They spoke of things which obviously were of no interest to either: of what was to be bought for the house, of what messages were to be given to Princess Sophie and Madame Julie and of whether we would have a good journey.

Foka entered and, speaking in the same voice he used to announce "dinner is served", stopped at the threshold and said: "The horses are ready." I noticed Mamma start and turn pale at the news, as though it were unexpected.

Foka was told to shut all the doors of the room. This amused me. "It's as though we were all hiding from someone."

When all were seated Foka sat down on the edge of a chair, but no sooner had he done so than the door

creaked and we all turned around. Natalia Savishna entered hurriedly and without raising her eyes seated herself by the door on the same chair as Foka. I can still see Foka's bald head, his wrinkled, set face and the bent, kind figure in a ruffled cap with gray hair peeping from under it. They sat close together on the chair and both looked uncomfortable.

I continued in my light-hearted, impatient state. The ten seconds during which we sat there behind closed doors seemed like an hour. At last everyone rose, crossed themselves and we began to take our leave. Papa embraced Mamma and kissed her several times.

"Now, now, my dear," Papa said. "We're not parting for ever."

"I'm very sad, all the same," Mamma said in a voice tremulous with tears.

When I heard that voice and saw her quivering lips and eyes filled with tears I forgot everything else and felt so sad, pained and frightened that I wanted to run away rather than say goodbye to her. I realized then that while embracing my father she was bidding us farewell, too.

She kissed and crossed Volodya so many times that thinking she would now turn to me, I stepped forward; but she blessed him again and again and pressed him to her breast. At last I embraced her and, clinging to her, wept bitterly, thinking of nothing but my sorrow.

When we went down to the carriages the tiresome domestics crowded round in the hall to say goodbye. Their "let me kiss your hand, sir", their resounding kisses on my shoulder and the smell of tallow on their hair aroused in me a feeling most akin to the repulsion felt by irritable people. Still under the impression of this feeling, I kissed Natalia Savishna's cap very coldly when she bid me a tearful goodbye.

It is strange that I can still in my mind's eye see the faces of all the domestics clearly and might have depicted them in the greatest detail; but Mamma's face and aspect escape my memory completely: perhaps because in all that time I was not once able to summon up the courage to look at her. It seemed to me then that if I were to do

this both her grief and mine would have become extreme.

I was the first to make a dash for the calash and sat down in the rear. The hood was up and I could see nothing, yet instinct told me Mamma was still there.

"Should I look at her again or not?... Just one last time!" I said to myself and leaned out of the calash towards the porch. At that very moment Mamma, sharing my thoughts, approached from the opposite side of the calash and called me by name. Hearing her voice behind me, I spun around so quickly that our heads bumped. She smiled sadly and gave me a last long kiss.

When we had driven a few yards off I found the courage to look at her. The wind was ruffling the light-blue kerchief tied around her head. With lowered head and face buried in her hands she was slowly mounting the porch steps. Foka supported her.

Papa sat beside me but did not speak. I, however, was overcome by tears and there was such a lump in my throat that I was afraid it would choke me ... On reaching the high road we saw a white handkerchief someone was waving from the balcony. I began waving my own, and this action calmed me somewhat. I continued to cry, but the thought that my tears were proof of a tender heart offered me both pleasure and consolation.

After we had gone about a mile I settled back more comfortably and began staring fixedly at the object nearest to my eyes, the flanks of the outrunner on my side. I watched the piebald outrunner flick its tail, catch one leg against the other and the coachman's braided whip lash it, making its legs move in unison; I watched the breech-band slap against it and the rings on the breech-band, too, and continued to look at it until the breech-band became covered with lather near the tail. I began looking around: at the undulating fields of ripe rye, at the dark, fallow fields on which here and there one could see a plough, a peasant, a mare and its foal, at the mile posts, and even glanced at the coachman's box to see which coachman was driving; and before the tears had dried on my face my thoughts were far from my mother, from whom I had parted, perhaps for ever. But every recollection made me think of her. I recalled the mushroom I had

found in the birch alley the day before. I recalled Lyubochka and Katenka arguing about who was to pick it, I recalled how they had wept when taking leave of us.

I was sorry for them! And sorry for Natalia Savishna, and the birch alley, and sorry for Foka! I was even sorry for nasty old Mimi! I was sorry for absolutely everything! And what about poor Mamma? And tears welled up in my eyes again, but not for long.

Chapter 15

CHILDHOOD

Happy, happy irremeable days of childhood! How can one fail to love and cherish its memories? These memories refresh and ennoble my soul and are a source of my greatest joy.

Having frolicked to my heart's content, I sit in my high chair at the tea table. It is late, I have long since finished my cup of milk and sugar, sleep is closing my lids, but I do not budge, I sit there listening. And how can I not listen? Mamma is talking to someone, and the sound of her voice is so sweet, so endearing. The sound alone says so much to my heart! I *gaze* at her face out of drowsy eyes and all at once she becomes so small, so tiny, her face no bigger than a button; but still, I see it as clearly as before: I see her glance at me and smile. I like seeing her so tiny. I squint harder and she becomes as tiny as the boys reflected in the pupils of one's eyes; but I move and the spell is broken; I squint again, turn, try my best to recall it, but in vain.

I rise, climb up and curl up comfortably in the big armchair.

"You'll fall asleep again, Nikolenka," Mamma says to me. "You had better go upstairs."

"I'm not sleepy, Mamma," I reply and vague, sweet dreams fill my mind, the sound slumber of childhood closes my eyes, and a moment later I drift off and sleep until I am awakened. I feel in my sleep that someone's

gentle hand touches me; I recognize the very touch and, still half-asleep, instinctively seize this hand and press it tightly to my lips.

Everyone is gone. A single candle burns in the drawing room. Mamma said she would waken me herself. It is she who has seated herself on the edge of the armchair in which I am sleeping. Her lovely, gentle hand smoothes my hair and her dear, familiar voice whispers in my ear:

"Get up, darling, it's time for bed."

No one's indifferent looks restrain her: she is not afraid to shower all her tenderness and love on me. I do not stir, but kiss her hand more fervently.

"Come, get up, my angel."

She puts her other hand around my neck and her fingers move rapidly, tickling me. It is quite still and nearly dark in the room. The tickling and being roused from sleep have excited me. Mamma sits beside me, she caresses me. I am aware of her scent and hear her voice. All this makes me jump up, throw my arms around her neck, press my head to her breast and say breathlessly:

"Oh, dear, dear Mamma, how I love you!"

She smiles her sad, enchanting smile, takes my head between her hands, kisses my forehead and lays me on her lap.

"So you love me very much?" She is silent a moment and then says: "I want you to always love me and never forget me. You won't forget your mamma if she will be no more, will you? You won't forget her, Nikolenka?"

She kisses me more tenderly still.

"Stop! And don't say that, my dearest, my darling!" I cry, kissing her knees as tears stream from my eyes, tears of love and rapture.

Afterwards, going upstairs and kneeling before the icons in my short quilted dressing-gown, how wonderful I feel as I say: "God bless my dear father and dear mother". Repeating the prayers which my infant lips first repeated lispingly after my beloved mother, my love for her and my love for God mingle in some strange way into a single emotion.

After saying my prayers I snuggle under the covers, my

heart feeling light and gay. One dream follows another, but what are they about? They are elusive, yet full of pure love and hope of radiant joy. And then I think of Karl Ivanych and his bitter lot; he is the only unfortunate person I know, and I feel so sorry for him, I feel such great love for him that tears flow from my eyes and I think: "God make him happy, make me able to help him, to ease his sorrow; I am ready to sacrifice everything for him." Then I press a favorite china toy, a rabbit or a dog, into the corner of my down pillow and look with pleasure at it lying there so warm and snug. Then I pray that God should make everyone happy and everyone content, and that tomorrow should be a fine day for playing out of doors. I turn on my other side, my thoughts and dreams become confused and jumbled, and I fall quietly and peacefully asleep, my face still wet from tears.

Will the exhilaration, the carefree spirit, the need for love and true faith one possesses in childhood ever return? What time of life can be better than that in which the two finest virtues, innocent joy and an infinite need for love, are the only motives one has?

Where are those ardent prayers? Where is the best of all gifts, those pure tears of tender emotion? A guardian angel would descend from heaven, dry these tears with a smile and bring sweet dreams to a child's innocent imagination.

Has life left such deep scars in my heart as to banish forever those tears and joys? Have only memories remained?

Chapter 16

THE POEM

Nearly a month after we had moved to Moscow I was writing at a large table upstairs in Grandmother's house. Sitting opposite was the drawing teacher who was putting the finishing touches on a black pencil drawing of the turbaned head of a Turk. Volodya stood behind the teacher,

craning his neck as he looked over his shoulder. The head was Volodya's first drawing in black lead pencil and was to be presented to Grandmother today, on her birthday.

"Won't you place some more shadow here?" Volodya said to the teacher, rising up on tiptoe and pointing to the Turk's neck.

"No, there's no need to," the teacher said, putting away the pencils and holder into a box with a sliding lid. "It's fine now and don't touch it. As for you, Nikolenka," he added, rising and still looking at the Turk out of the corner of his eye, "won't you finally tell us your secret: what will you give your grandmother? I really think you should have done a head, too. Goodbye, sirs," he said, picked up his hat and a ticket[1] and left.

At that moment I also thought it would have been better to have drawn a head instead of that over which I labored. When we had been told that our grandmother's birthday was not far off and that we ought to prepare gifts for the event, I decided to write her a poem for the occasion and made up two rhyming lines at once, hoping to compose the others as easily. I cannot recall how such an unlikely thought for a child entered my mind, but I do remember that I was very pleased with it and in reply to all questions on the subject said that I would certainly have a gift for Grandmother, but would not tell a soul what it was.

Contrary to my expectations, I found that despite all my efforts I could compose no more than the two lines I had made up on the spur of the moment. I began reading the poems in our books, but neither Dmitriev nor Derzhavin were of any help to me. On the contrary, they merely served to strengthen my conviction that I had no talent. Knowing that Karl Ivanych was fond of copying out verses, I began poking among his papers surreptitiously and found, among the German poems, one in Russian which he had penned.

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[1] A tutor was given a "ticket" for each lesson and was later paid in accordance with the number of tickets accrued.–*Tr.*

To Madame L... Petrovskaya, June 3, 1828

Remember near,
Remember far,
Remember of me
Also now and until always,
Remember also until my grave,
How true I knew to love.

Karl Mauer

This poem, written in a fine round hand on a sheet of good notepaper, pleased me by the touching feeling with which it was imbued; I immediately learned it by heart and resolved to use it as my model. Things improved after that. On the great day a greeting in the form of a twelve-line poem was ready and, sitting at the table in the schoolroom, I was copying it out onto a sheet of vellum.

I had already spoiled two sheets of paper ... not that I intended to change anything in the poem: I thought it perfect; but starting with the third line the ends of the lines began turning up more and more, so that even from a distance one could see the writing was crooked and no good at all.

The third sheet was just as crookedly-written as the other two but I decided not to rewrite it again. In my poem I wished Grandmother many happy returns of the day and concluded as follows:

We shall try to be a comfort,
For we love you like a mother.

It did not seem bad at all, but the last line somehow jarred my ear.

"For we love you like a mo-ther," I repeated in a mumble. "What word can I rhyme instead of *mother*? Other? Brother? Ah, it'll do! Anyhow, it's better than Karl Ivanych's."

And I wrote out the last line. Later, in the bedroom, I read my poem aloud with feeling and gestures. There was no meter to some of the lines, but I did not dwell on them; the last line, however, struck me more forcefully and disagreeably than before. I sat down on my bed and fell to thinking ...

"Why did I write: *like a mother*? She's not here and there's no need to mention her; true, I love Grandmother and respect her, but still, it's not the same ... Why did I write that, why did I lie? Even though it's only a poem, I oughtn't have, anyway."

Just then the tailor entered with our new suits.

"Well, it'll have to do!" I exclaimed with impatience, shoved the poem angrily under my pillow and ran off to try on my Moscow clothes.

Our Moscow clothes were splendid: the brown dress-coats with small brass buttons fit closely, not like the clothes that were made for us in the country and which allowed for growth; the black trousers, also tight-fitting, etched our calves marvellously and came down over the tops of our boots.

"Now at last I have pantaloons with straps!" I was saying to myself delightedly as I examined my legs from every angle. Although I felt very constricted in my new clothes I concealed this fact from everyone and declared that, on the contrary, I felt very comfortable and if there were any fault it was only that they were a little loose. After that I stood in front of the looking glass for quite some time brushing my heavily-pomaded hair, but try as I would I could not smooth down my cowlick. The moment I stopped pressing it down with the brush to test the result it would rise and stick out in all directions, making me look quite ridiculous.

Karl Ivanych was dressing in another room, and a blue dress-coat and some white garments were taken to him through the schoolroom. I heard one of Grandmother's maids speaking outside the door leading to the stairs; I went out to see what she wanted. She was holding a stiffly starched shirtfront and said that she had brought it for Karl Ivanych and had not slept that night in order to have it ready on time. I said I would give the shirtfront to him and asked whether Grandmother was up.

"Oh, yes, sir! She's already had her coffee, and the priest is here. What a fine young gentleman you are!" she added with a smile, surveying my new clothes.

Her remark made me blush. I spun around on one foot, snapped my fingers and jumped, to let her see that she did

not yet know what a truly fine young gentleman I was.

When I brought Karl Ivanych the shirtfront he no longer needed it: he had put on another and, stooping in front of a small looking glass which stood on the table, had both hands on the full bow of his cravat and was trying to see whether his clean-shaven chin would pass through it easily. Giving our clothes a few final tugs and asking Nikolai to do the same for him, he took us down to Grandmother. I can only smile at recalling how strongly we three smelled of pomatum as we descended the stairs.

Karl Ivanych carried a little box he had made, Volodya had his drawing and I my poem. Each had ready the words with which he would present his gift. At the very moment Karl Ivanych opened the door to the ballroom the priest was putting on his chasuble and the first sounds of the service were heard.

Grandmother was already in the ballroom. She stood by the wall, bent over and leaning on the back of a chair, praying devoutly. Papa stood beside her. He turned towards us and smiled, noticing our confusion as we hastily hid our gifts behind our backs and, trying to escape notice, stopped just inside the door. The effect of surprise on which we had counted was lost.

As we were each approaching in turn to kiss the cross, I was suddenly gripped by an insurmountable, paralyzing fit of shyness, and feeling that I would never have the courage to present my gift, I hid behind Karl Ivanych who, having expressed his good wishes to Grandmother in the loftiest of terms, transferred the little box from his right hand to his left, presented it to her and stepped aside to let Volodya come forward. Grandmother seemed delighted by the little gilt-edged box and expressed her thanks with the kindest of smiles. It was evident, however, that she did not know where to put the box and that was probably why she asked Papa to see how wonderfully well it was made.

Having satisfied his curiosity, Papa handed it to the priest who seemed quite taken by the object: he shook his head and glanced curiously now at the little box, now at the craftsman who had made such a wondrous thing.

Volodya presented his Turk and also received the most flattering praise from all. It was now my turn. Grandmother looked at me with an encouraging smile.

Those who have experienced shyness know that this feeling increases in direct proportion to its duration, while determination decreases in the inverse, that is to say: the longer this condition lasts, the more insuperable it becomes and the less resolution remains.

The last of my courage and determination deserted me as Karl Ivanych and Volodya were presenting their gifts. My shyness reached the utmost degree: I felt the blood continually rushing from my heart to my head, one color replacing another on my face and large drops of perspiration appearing on my forehead and nose. My ears were flaming, I was shivering and perspiring and shifted my weight from one foot to the other, but did not budge.

"Come, Nikolenka, show us what you've got, a little box or a drawing?" Papa said to me. There was nothing I could do: with a trembling hand I presented the crumpled, fatal, rolled-up paper, but my voice refused to obey me and I stood in silence before Grandmother. I was terrified at the thought that instead of the expected drawing my worthless poem would be read aloud, including the words: *like a mother*, which would prove beyond a doubt that I had never loved her and had forgotten her. How can I describe my suffering when Grandmother began reading my poem aloud and when, unable to decipher it, she would stop in the middle of a line to glance at Papa with a smile, which at the time seemed mocking to me, when she did not pronounce a word as I wished it to be pronounced or when, due to her poor eyesight and not having read it to the end, she handed the sheet of paper to Papa and asked him to read it aloud to her from the beginning? It seemed to me that she did this because she was tired of reading such a poorly-written, crooked-lined poem and in order that Papa might himself read the last line which so clearly proved my lack of feeling. I expected him to rap me on the nose with the poem and to say: "You horrid boy, you are not to forget your mother ... Take this!" but nothing of the kind happened; on the contrary, when the poem had been read Grandmother

said: "*Charmant!*" and kissed me on the forehead.

The little box, the drawing and the poem were placed on the flap-table of the wing chair in which Grandmother always sat beside two lawn handkerchiefs and a snuffbox adorned with Mamma's portrait.

"Princess Varvara Ilyinichna," one of the two huge footmen who usually stood behind Grandmother's coach announced.

Grandmother was lost in thought as she gazed at the portrait set in the lid of the tortoise-shell snuffbox and did not reply.

"Shall I show her in, Your Excellency?" the footman repeated.

Chapter 17

PRINCESS KORNAKOVA

"Show her in," Grandmother said, settling back in the armchair.

The princess was a woman of about forty-five, small, thin and sallow, with unpleasant little gray-green eyes whose expression clearly belied the sugary sweet set of her small mouth. Strawberry blonde hair could be seen from under her velvet bonnet trimmed with an ostrich feather; her brows and lashes seemed paler and more carroty against the unhealthy pallor of her face. In spite of this, and owing to her unconstrained movements, her tiny hands and the peculiar leanness of her features, there was a stamp of nobility and energy in her general appearance.

The princess was very talkative and in her manner of speech belonged to that category of people who always speak as though they are being contradicted, even though no one has uttered a word; she now raised her voice, now gradually lowered it, and would suddenly begin to speak with renewed force, looking around at those present but not participating in the conversation as though she hoped to fortify herself by doing so.

Though the princess had kissed Grandmother's hand

and kept calling her *ma bonne tante*,[1] I observed that Grandmother was displeased with her. She raised her brows in a peculiar way as she listened to her explanation of why Prince Mikhailo had been quite unable to come and offer Grandmother his good wishes in person, although he had longed to do so, and replied in Russian to the princess's French, drawing out her words uncommonly:

"I am very grateful to you, my dear, for your attentiveness; and as for Prince Mikhailo's not having come, well, there is really no need to speak of it ... he is always so busy; and besides, what pleasure can there be for him in visiting an old woman?"

And, without giving the princess a chance to refute her words, she continued:

"And how are your children, my dear?"

"Thank God, *ma tante*, they are growing nicely, studying and getting into mischief ... especially Etienne, the eldest. He is becoming so unruly there is no keeping him in check, but he's so clever, *un garçon qui promet*.[2] Can you imagine, *mon cousin*," she continued, addressing Papa alone, since Grandmother, being not in the least interested in the princess's children but wishing to show off her own grandchildren, had carefully taken my poem from under the little box and had begun to unfold the paper, "can you imagine, *mon cousin*, what he did the other day ..."

And the princess, bending towards Papa, began recounting something animatedly. Having finished her story, which I did not hear, she laughed and, looking inquiringly at Papa, said:

"What do you think of such a boy, *mon cousin*? He deserved to be whipped, but the prank was so clever and amusing that I forgave him, *mon cousin*."

And the princess, turning her eyes to Grandmother but saying no more, continued to smile.

"Do you *beat* your children, my dear?" Grandmother asked, raising her brows significantly and emphasizing the word *beat*.

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[1] My dear aunt.

[2] A promising lad.

"Ah, *ma bonne tante*," the princess replied in a sweet little voice, glancing swiftly at Papa, "I know your opinion on the matter, but allow me in this one instance to disagree with you. Much as I have thought, much as I have read and sought advice on the subject, experience has in the end convinced me of the need to govern children through fear. Fear is what will make something of a child ... Is that not so, *mon cousin*? And what, *je vous demande un peu*,[1] do children fear more than a rod?"

At this she glanced at us inquiringly, and I confess I felt rather uncomfortable at that moment.

"No matter what you say, a boy up to twelve and even up to fourteen is still a child. Now girls are something else again."

"How lucky I am," I thought, "not to be her son."

"Yes, that is fine, my dear," Grandmother said, folding up my poem and tucking it under the little box as though she did not now consider the princess worthy of hearing such a fine composition, "that is all very well, but pray tell me how can you then expect delicacy of feeling in your children?"

And considering this argument irrefutable, Grandmother added in order to put an end to the discussion:

"However, each one abides by his own opinion on the subject."

The princess did not reply, but smiled condescendingly as though to show that she forgave these strange prejudices in a person whom she esteemed so highly.

"Ah, do introduce me to your young men," she said, looking at us and smiling pleasantly.

We rose and, turning our eyes to the princess's face, wondered what we were to do to show that we were now acquainted.

"Well, kiss the princess's hand," Papa said.

"Pray love your old aunt," she said, kissing Volodya's head. "Though the relationship is a distant one, I go by ties of friendship and not by degree of kinship," she added, addressing her remark chiefly to Grandmother, but

[1] I ask you now.

Grandmother continued to be displeased by her and replied:

"Eh, my dear, who attaches any value to a kinship of this kind nowadays?"

"This one's going to be quite a young man of the world," Papa said, indicating Volodya, "and this one will be a poet," he added as I kissed the princess's thin little hand, at the same time clearly picturing to myself a rod in this hand, a bench under the rod, and so on, and so forth.

"Which?" the princess asked, retaining my hand.

"This little tousled one," Papa replied, smiling broadly.

"What's my hair to him? Is there nothing else to talk about?" I wondered and went off into a corner.

I had the strangest conception of beauty and even thought Karl Ivanych to be the handsomest man in the world, but I knew for a fact that I was ugly and was not at all mistaken in this. That is why every allusion to my appearance wounded my feelings.

I remember so well one day at dinner, I was about six at the time, they were speaking of my looks and Mamma, trying to find something nice about my face, said that I had intelligent eyes and a pleasant smile and, finally, giving in to my father's arguments and to what was obvious, had to admit that I was plain. Later, when I thanked her for my dinner, she patted my cheek and said:

"You should know, Nikolenka, that no one will love you for your face. That is why you must try to be a kind and clever boy."

These words not only convinced me that I was not handsome but also that I would most certainly be a kind and clever boy.

In spite of this I was often overcome by despair: I imagined that life could hold no happiness for one with such a broad nose, thick lips and small gray eyes as mine. I asked God to perform a miracle, to make me handsome, and I was ready to give up everything I had then and all that I might possess in the future in exchange for a handsome face.

Chapter 18

PRINCE IVAN IVANOVICH

After the princess had listened to the poem and showered praise on the poet, Grandmother relented, began speaking to her in French, stopped calling her *my dear* and invited her to return that same evening with her children, to which the princess agreed and, after staying a while longer, left.

There were so many visitors who had come to extend their good wishes to Grandmother that day that several carriages at a time stood by the front door all through the morning.

"*Bonjour, chère cousine*," one of the visitors said, entering the room and kissing Grandmother's hand.

He was a tall man of about seventy, wearing a uniform with large epaulets and a large white cross at his collar, and with a calm, frank expression. I was amazed at the ease and simplicity of his movements. Though only a sparse semi-circle of hair remained at the back of his head and the set of his upper lip indicated an obvious scarcity of teeth, his face was still remarkably handsome.

Towards the end of the last century Prince Ivan Ivanovich, thanks to his noble character, good looks, remarkable courage, distinguished and influential family and particularly to his good fortune, had made a brilliant career while still a very young man. He continued in the service and very soon his ambition was satisfied to such a degree that there was nothing more he could wish for in this respect. From early youth he had behaved as though he were preparing to assume that exalted place in society which fate subsequently gave to him. That is why, although there was in his dazzling and somewhat vainglorious life, as in all others, mishap, disappointment and vexation, he never once was false to his placid nature, his lofty cast of mind or his profound moral and religious principles and so earned the respect of all, not so much by his brilliant position as by his consistency and integrity. His was no great mind, but thanks to a position which allowed him to look down on all of life's vanities, his views were mag-

nanimous. He was kind and sympathetic but cold and somewhat aloof in manner. This was because, having been placed in a position in which he could be of use to many, he attempted by his coldness to shield himself from the endless requests and toadying of people who wished only to avail themselves of his influence. This coldness was, however, tempered by the indulgent courtesy of a man of *the highest society*. He was well educated and well read, but his education had stopped at what he had acquired in his youth, that is, at the end of the last century. He had read everything of note in the field of philosophy and rhetoric that had been written in France in the 18th century and was thoroughly acquainted with the best works of French literature, so that he was able and liked often to quote passages from Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Molière, Montaigne and Fénelon; he was exceptionally well versed in mythology, had studied with profit the ancient epic poems in French translation, had an adequate knowledge of history, gleaned from Ségur, but had no conception of mathematics beyond arithmetic, nor of physics, nor of contemporary literature: in conversation he could be politely silent or utter a few commonplaces about Goethe, Schiller and Byron, but had never read their works. Notwithstanding this classical French education, of which so few examples now remain, his conversation was simple, and this simplicity both concealed his ignorance of certain things and revealed his good breeding and tolerance. He was a great foe of all eccentricity, saying that eccentricity was an expedient of vulgar people. A social life was a necessity to him, no matter where he resided. In Moscow or abroad, he always lived on an equally grand scale and on certain days entertained the whole town. His standing was such that an invitation from him was a passport to every drawing room, that many young and pretty ladies readily offered him their rosy cheeks which he kissed with seemingly paternal affection, and that some apparently very important and proper people were delighted beyond words when permitted to join the prince at cards.

Few people remained who, like my grandmother, were of the prince's own set, upbringing, views and age; that is

why he cherished his long-standing friendship with her and always accorded her great respect.

I could not take my eyes off the prince: the deference everyone accorded him, his large epaulets, the particular joy Grandmother expressed on seeing him and the fact that he alone, evidently, was not afraid of her, was completely at ease with her and even had the courage to address her as *ma cousine*, inspired in me a feeling of reverence that was equal to, if not greater than, that which I had for Grandmother. When he was shown my poem he called me up to him and said:

"Who knows, *ma cousine*, perhaps he will be a second Derzhavin."

At this he pinched my cheek so hard that if I did not cry out it was only because I perceived it was meant as a caress.

The visitors were gone. Papa and Volodya had left the room. The prince, Grandmother and I were alone in the drawing room.

"How is it our dear Natalia Nikolayevna did not come?" Prince Ivan Ivanovich suddenly asked after a moment's pause.

"Ah, *mon cher*," Grandmother replied, lowering her voice and laying her hand on the sleeve of his uniform, "she would certainly have come if she were at liberty to do as she pleases. She writes that Pierre suggested she come, but that she refused of her own free will because they apparently have had no income at all this year. And she adds: 'Besides, there is no need for me to move the entire household to Moscow this year. Lyubochka is still too young and as for the boys, who will be living with you, my heart is more at ease than if they were with me.' That is all good and well," Grandmother continued in a tone of voice which made it quite clear that she did not consider this good and well at all. "It was high time the boys were sent here so that they might learn something and become accustomed to society; what kind of an education could they get in the country?... The eldest will soon be thirteen, and the other is eleven ... Have you noticed, *mon cousin*, they are just like little savages here ... they do not even know how to enter a room."

"I cannot understand it," the prince replied. "Why these constant complaints about straitened circumstances? *He* has a very handsome fortune, and as for Natasha's Khabarovka, where in days gone by you and I used to act in amateur theatricals, I know it as the fingers of my hand, it is a magnificent estate! And it should always bring in a splendid income."

"I will tell you as a true friend," Grandmother interrupted with a look of sadness on her face, "it seems to me that these are but excuses for *him* to live here alone, to haunt his clubs, dinner parties and do heaven knows what else; and she suspects nothing. You know she is an angel of goodness, she believes everything *he* says. He convinced her that the children should be taken to Moscow and she ought to remain alone in the country with that stupid governess, and she believed him; if he were to tell her that the children should be whipped, as Princess Varvara Ilyinichna whips hers, I believe she would even agree to that," Grandmother said, turning in her armchair with an expression of utter contempt. "Yes, my dear," Grandmother continued after a moment's pause and picking up one of the two handkerchiefs to wipe away a tear, "I often think that *he* is incapable of either appreciating or understanding her and that despite her infinite goodness, love for him and attempts to conceal her grief, I know this only too well, she cannot be happy with him. And mark my words, if he does not ..."

Grandmother buried her face in her handkerchief.

"*Eh, ma bonne amie*," [1] the prince said reproachfully, "I see you have not become any more reasonable, you are forever distressed and weeping over some imagined sorrow. For shame, I have known *him* for many years and know him to be a kind, considerate and excellent husband and, above all, a true gentleman, *un parfait honnête homme*." [2]

Having inadvertently overheard a conversation which I ought not to have listened in on, I left the room on tiptoe and in great agitation.

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[1] Ah, my dear friend.

[2] A most honorable man.

Chapter 19

THE IVINS

"Volodya! Volodya! The Ivins!" I shouted, looking through the window and spotting three boys in short blue overcoats with beaver collars following a young dandy of a tutor across the street towards our house.

The Ivins were our relatives and almost of the same age as we. We were introduced to them soon after our arrival in Moscow and became friends.

The middle Ivin, Seryozha, was an olive-skinned, curly-haired boy with a firm, turned-up little nose, very fresh red lips which seldom completely closed over his rather prominent upper row of white teeth, fine dark-blue eyes and a very lively expression. He never smiled, but either looked extremely serious or laughed heartily, his laugh loud, infectious and ringing. I was struck at first sight by his unusual beauty. I felt irresistibly drawn to him. Just seeing him would make me happy, and at one time all the strivings of my soul were concentrated on this desire: when three or four days passed without my seeing him I would begin to fret and was so miserable I could cry. All my thoughts, both awake and asleep, were of him: on going to bed I hoped I would dream of him; closing my eyes, I retained his image and cherished it as the greatest joy. I valued this feeling so that I could never have confided in anyone. Perhaps because he was tired of feeling my anxious eyes forever on him or simply not being at all inclined towards me, he obviously preferred to play and talk with Volodya rather than with me. Still, I was content, wished for nothing, demanded nothing and was ready to sacrifice my all for him. Besides the passionate attraction I felt towards him, his presence inspired in me, to no lesser degree, another feeling, a dread of distressing him, of offending him somehow, of displeasing him. Perhaps this was because he seemed so arrogant or because, despising my own looks, I placed too much value on the advantages of beauty in others or, which was most probable, because, and this being an infallible sign of affection, I feared him as much as I loved him. The first time

Seryozha spoke to me I was so taken aback by this unexpected joy that I turned pale, blushed and could not reply. He had a bad habit whenever he became lost in thought of fixing his eyes on some spot and blinking rapidly, twitching his nose and eyebrows. Everyone thought this habit spoiled his looks, but I thought it so charming I unconsciously got into the habit of doing the same, so that several days after we became acquainted Grandmother asked whether my eyes bothered me, since I was blinking like an owl. No word of affection ever passed between us, yet he sensed his power over me and used it unconsciously but tyrannically in our childish relationship. For my part, no matter how I yearned to pour my heart out to him, I feared him too greatly to venture to be frank. I tried to appear indifferent and submitted to his will without a murmur. At times his power over me seemed oppressive and unbearable, but I was unable to free myself of it.

I feel sad recalling this pure, beautiful feeling of selfless, boundless affection which died without having been spoken of and without having been reciprocated.

It is strange to think that when I was a child I tried to resemble a grown-up, but ever since I ceased being one I have often longed to resemble a child. How often this reluctance to behave like a child in my relations with Seryozha checked the emotion that was ready to pour forth and caused me to dissemble a hypocrite. Not only did I not dare kiss him, which I sometimes longed to do, or take his hand, or tell him how glad I was to see him, I did not even dare call him Seryozha, but only Sergei: for such was our rule. Any expression of sentimentality was proof of childishness, and he who permitted himself this was still *a little boy*. Not having passed as yet through those bitter trials which make grown people become cautious and cold in their relations, we deprived ourselves of the pure joys of tender, childish attachments merely from a strange desire to imitate the *grown-ups*.

I met the Ivins in the front hall, greeted them and dashed off to Grandmother: I announced the Ivins' arrival with such delight as though the news should overjoy her. Then, my eyes never wavering from Seryozha, I fol-

lowed him to the drawing room and watched his every movement. When Grandmother remarked as to how he had grown and fixed her keen eyes on him I experienced that feeling of dread and hope which an artist must experience as he waits for sentence to be passed on his work by a revered critic.

The Ivins' young tutor, Herr Frost, having received Grandmother's permission, went out into the front garden with us, sat down on a green bench, crossed his legs gracefully, set his brass-headed walking stick between them and lit a cigar with the air of a man quite pleased with himself.

Herr Frost was a German, but a German of quite a different caliber than our good Karl Ivanych: firstly, he spoke Russian correctly and French with a marked accent and enjoyed the reputation, especially among the ladies, of being a very learned man; secondly, he had a reddish moustache, wore a large ruby stickpin in his black satin cravat, the ends of which were tucked under his braces, and iridescent, sky-blue pantaloons with straps; thirdly, he was young, had a handsome, self-satisfied mien and unusually fine, muscular legs. It was evident that he was particularly proud of this last advantage, and for this reason endeavored to place his legs in full view and, whether standing or sitting, always flexed the muscles of his calves. He was a type of young Russian-born German who aspired to be a dandy and a ladies' man.

We were having a wonderful time in the garden. The game of robbers was proceeding splendidly, but an incident occurred that nearly spoiled everything. Seryozha was a robber. While pursuing the travellers, he stumbled and fell full force, hitting his knee against a tree so violently I thought he would shatter the bone. Though I was a gendarme and it was my duty to catch him, I went up to him and asked with concern whether it hurt very much. Seryozha flared up at me. He clenched his fists, stamped his foot and in a voice which clearly showed he was in great pain, shouted at me:

"What's this? There's no sense playing now! Why don't you catch me? Why don't you catch me?" he repeated several times, looking out of the corner of his eye at Volo-

dya and the eldest Ivin, both of whom, being travellers, were running and skipping along the path, and with a sudden wild yell he ran off in pursuit, laughing loudly.

I cannot express how this heroic deed amazed and overwhelmed me: in spite of the terrible pain he not only did not burst into tears but did not give any indication that he was hurt and did not for a moment forget the game.

Soon after, when Ilenka Grap joined us and we went upstairs before dinner, Seryozha had occasion to overwhelm and impress me still more by his astonishing courage and firmness of will.

Ilenka Grap was the son of a poor foreigner who had once lived in my grandfather's house, was in some way indebted to him and now felt it his sacred duty to send his son over to our house quite often. If he supposed that an acquaintanceship with us would bring his son some sort of honor or pleasure he was quite mistaken, for not only were we not friends with Ilenka, but took notice of him only when we wished to make fun of him. Ilenka Grap was a boy of about thirteen, tall, thin and pale, with a pinched face and a good-natured, docile expression. He was very poorly dressed but always pomaded so abundantly that we were certain that on sunny days the pomatum melted on Grap's head and trickled down under his jacket. When I think of him now I find that he was a very obliging, quiet and kind-hearted boy. At the time, however, he seemed such a contemptible creature that he was not worth pitying or even thinking about.

When the game of robbers was over we went upstairs and began *making an uproar* and showing off in front of each other by doing various gymnastic feats. Ilenka watched us with a shy smile of surprise and when he was invited to try and do the same he refused, saying that he was not strong enough. Seryozha was so charming; he took off his jacket, his face was flushed, his eyes shone, he laughed continually and thought up new mischief: he jumped over three chairs set in a row, did a cartwheel across the room, did a handstand on the volumes of Tatishchev's Dictionary which he had stacked like a pedestal in the middle of the room and waggled his feet so hilariously that it was impossible not to laugh. After

this last prank he became thoughtful, blinked a few times and suddenly approached Ilenka, looking perfectly serious. "Try to do it. Truly, it's not difficult." Grap, seeing that he was the center of attention, blushed and assured us in a barely audible voice that he could not possibly do it.

"Indeed, why doesn't he want to show us? You'd think he was a girl ... We must have him do a handstand!"

And Seryozha took him by the hand.

"By all means, by all means, a handstand!" we all shouted, crowding around Ilenka who was noticeably frightened and had grown pale, seized him by the arms and dragged him towards the dictionaries.

"Let go, I'll do it myself! You'll tear my jacket!" cried the unhappy victim. But these cries of anguish merely increased our excitement. We were dying of laughter. The green jacket was cracking at the seams.

Volodya and the eldest Ivin pressed his head down until it rested on the dictionaries; Seryozha and I seized the poor boy's skinny legs as he kicked frantically, pushed his pantaloons up to his knees and, laughing uproariously, raised them swiftly into the air; the youngest Ivin steadied his body.

It so happened that after our boisterous laughter we all suddenly fell silent and it became so still in the room that the only sound was that of the unhappy Grap's labored breathing. At that moment I was not quite convinced that all this was so very funny and jolly.

"Good for you now," Seryozha said, slapping him.

Ilenka was silent and, trying to break free, kicked out in all directions. In one of these frantic movements his heel struck Seryozha's eye so painfully that Seryozha instantly let go of his legs, clapped his hands to his eye, which had begun to tear involuntarily, and pushed Ilenka with all his might. Ilenka, no longer supported by us, crashed to the floor like something inanimate and all he could say through his tears was:

"Why do you bully me so?"

We were struck by the pitiful appearance of poor Ilenka with his tear-stained face, disheveled hair and pushed-up pantaloons that revealed the unpolished tops of his boots; we were all silent and smiled constrainedly.

curled so because it had been rolled up since morning in squares of the *Moscow Journal* and that it had been crisped with a hot curling iron. She seemed to have been born with this curly head.

Her most striking feature was the unusual size of her prominent, slightly veiled eyes which contrasted strangely but pleasantly with her tiny mouth. Her lips were set and her eyes so grave that the general expression of her face suggested no promise of a smile, and therefore the smile when it did come was all the more enchanting.

Trying not to be noticed, I slipped through the door to the ballroom and decided to walk up and down, pretending to be deep in thought and quite unaware that company had arrived. When the visitors were halfway through the ballroom I seemed to rouse myself, clicked my heels and told them Grandmother was in the drawing room. Mme Valakhina, whose face I liked very much, particularly as I discovered in it a marked resemblance to that of her daughter Sonichka, nodded to me graciously.

Grandmother seemed very pleased to see Sonichka: she called her over, arranged a lock that fell over her forehead and, looking into her face intently, said: "*Quelle charmante enfant!*" Sonichka smiled, blushed and seemed so pretty that, looking at her, I blushed, too.

"I hope you won't be bored here, my sweet," Grandmother said, cupping her hand under Sonichka's chin. "I want you to be merry and to dance as much as possible. We now have one lady and two gentlemen," she added, addressing Mme Valakhina and touching me. Being brought together thus so thrilled me it made me blush again.

Feeling that my shyness was increasing and hearing the sound of another approaching carriage, I thought it best to leave. In the hall I came upon Princess Kornakova, her son and an incredible number of daughters. The daughters all looked alike: they resembled the princess and were very plain; that is why not one of them attracted one's attention. As they took off their cloaks and boas they all began speaking in piping voices, fussed about and laughed at something, evidently at there being so many of them.

Etienne was a boy of about fifteen, tall, fleshy, with

a pasty face, sunken eyes with dark shadows under them and hands and feet much too large for his age. He was awkward, had an unpleasant raw voice, but seemed very pleased with himself and was precisely what, in my estimation, a boy who was whipped with a rod would be like.

We stood for some time facing and scrutinizing one another without saying a word. Then, drawing closer, it seemed we were about to embrace, but after looking once more into one another's eyes we changed our minds for some reason. When the dresses of all his sisters had rustled past us I asked, in order to somehow start the conversation, whether they had not been crowded in the carriage.

"I don't know," he replied indifferently. "I never ride in the carriage, because as soon as I get in I become sick and Mamma knows it. Whenever we drive out in the evening I always sit on the box, it's much more fun, you can see everything, Philip lets me drive and sometimes I take the whip. And sometimes, you know, at those that pass by," here he gestured significantly, "it's magnificent!"

"Your Excellency," the footman said, entering the hall, "Philip says: where did you please put the whip?"

"Where did I put it? Why, I gave it back to him."

"He says you didn't."

"Well, then, I hung it on the carriage lamp."

"Philip says it's not on the lamp, either, so you might as well say that you lost it, and now Philip will have to pay out his own money for your mischief," the angry footman continued, becoming more and more animated.

The footman, who appeared to be a solemn and morose man, seemed to be taking Philip's side very warmly and to be determined to clear the matter up at any cost. Prompted by an instinctive tactfulness, I walked off a bit, as though I had not heard anything, but the other footmen present behaved quite differently: they crowded round, glancing at the old retainer approvingly.

"All right, so what if I have lost it?" Etienne said, avoiding any further explanation. "I'll pay whatever it'll cost him. How absurd!" he added, coming up to me and leading me off to the drawing room.

"Wait a minute, sir. How will you pay him? I know how you pay: you've been paying back Maria Vasilyevna twenty kopecks for nearly eight months now and me for nearly two years, I believe, and Petrushka..."

"Hold your tongue, will you!" the young prince shouted, turning pale from rage. "You'll see, I'll tell on you."

"Tell on you, tell on you!" the footman muttered. "For shame, Your Excellency!" he added emphatically as we entered the ballroom and he went off to the chest, carrying the cloaks.

"Well, well, well!" we heard someone say approvingly in the hall behind us.

Grandmother had a special gift of using the second person singular or the second person plural, with various intonations in each given case, to express her opinion of others. Although she used the polite *vous* and the familiar *tu* contrary to accepted usage, these shadings took on a very different meaning when they fell from her lips. When the young prince approached her she said a few words to him, using the polite *vous* and glanced at him with such distaste that if I were he I should have been mortified, but Etienne was evidently a boy of a different *stamp*: not only did he completely disregard Grandmother's sally, but her person as well, and bowed to the gathering in general if not gracefully, then at least with perfect ease. I had eyes for Sonichka alone. I recall that when Volodya, Etienne and I were talking in a spot of the ballroom from which I could see Sonichka and she could see and hear us, I spoke with pleasure; when I chanced to say a word which I considered to be amusing or bold I raised my voice and glanced towards the door to the drawing room; but when we moved on to another spot from which we could not be seen or heard from the drawing room I was silent and took no further interest in the conversation.

The drawing room and the ballroom were gradually filling up with guests. Among them, as is always the case at children's parties, were several older children who did not wish to miss an occasion for enjoying themselves and dancing, though pretending to do so only to please the hostess.

When the Ivins arrived I felt a strange vexation instead of the pleasure I usually experienced at seeing Seryozha, for he would meet Sonichka and she would like him.

Chapter 21

BEFORE THE MAZURKA

"Ah, I see there'll be dancing," Seryozha said, appearing from the drawing room and pulling a new pair of kid gloves from his pocket, "I must put on my gloves."

"Goodness! We have no gloves," I said to myself. "I must go upstairs and look for some."

Though I searched through every chest of drawers, all I found in one were our green travelling mittens and in another a kid glove which could be of no earthly use to me: firstly, because it was extremely old and dirty, secondly, because it was too big and, above all, because the middle finger was missing, having probably been cut off long ago by Karl Ivanych for a sore finger. However, I pulled on this remnant of a glove and contemplated that part of my middle finger which was always ink-stained.

"Now if Natalia Savishna were here she would surely have found some gloves, too. I can't go downstairs like this, because if I'm asked why I'm not dancing what shall I say? And I can't remain here, either, because I'll certainly be missed. What am I to do?" said I, waving my arms about

"What are you doing here?" Volodya asked, running into the room. "Go and find a partner ... They're about to begin."

"Volodya," I said to him, holding up my hand with two fingers sticking out of the dirty glove and speaking in a voice that bordered on despair, "Volodya, you haven't even thought of this!"

"Of what?" he asked impatiently. "Oh! Of gloves," he added quite indifferently, noticing my hand. "Indeed, we've none. I must ask Grandmother ... what will she say?" and he ran back downstairs without further ado.

The composure with which he had treated a matter that had seemed so important to me relieved my mind and I hurried to the drawing room, having completely forgotten about the ugly glove on my left hand.

Coming softly up to Grandmother's armchair and touching her mantle lightly, I whispered:

"Grandmother! What shall we do? We've no gloves!"

"What, my dear?"

"We have no gloves," I repeated, drawing closer and placing both my hands on the arm of the chair.

"And what is this?" she said, suddenly seizing my left hand. "*Voyez, ma chère*," [1] she continued, turning to Mme Valakhina, "*voyez comme ce jeune homme c'est fait élégant pour danser avec votre fille.*" [2]

Grandmother held my hand firmly and glanced at the company seriously but inquiringly until the curiosity of all was satisfied and the laughter had become general.

I would have been mortified if Seryozha had seen me when, cringing from shame, I tried in vain to pull my hand free, but I was not a bit put out to see Sonichka laughing so hard her eyes filled with tears and her ringlets bounced about her flushed face. I realized that her laughter was too loud and natural to be mocking. On the contrary, the fact that we had laughed together and had looked at one another seemed to draw us closer together. The episode of the glove, though it might have ended badly, brought me this advantage: it made me feel at ease in a circle which had always seemed to me the most terrifying, the drawing room circle. I no longer felt in the least bit shy in the ballroom.

The suffering of shy people stems from their uncertainty as to the opinion that has been formed of them; as soon as this opinion is clearly expressed, no matter what it be, the suffering ceases.

How charming Sonichka Valakhina was when she danced the French quadrille with the clumsy young prince, my *vis-à-vis*! How sweetly she smiled when she gave me her hand in the *chaine*! How charmingly her

[1] Look, my dear.

[2] See how elegant this young man has made himself to dance with your daughter.

auburn ringlets bounced in time to the music and how naively her tiny feet did the *jeté-assemblé*! In the fifth figure, when my partner left me to pass to the other side and when I, waiting for the next bar of music, was preparing to do my solo, Sonichka compressed her lips gravely and looked the other way. But she need not have feared for me: I boldly embarked on the *chassé en avant, chassé en arrière et glissade* and, as I approached her, playfully held up the glove with my two fingers sticking through it. She burst out laughing, and her tiny feet tripped across the parquet still more charmingly. I also remember that when we all joined hands and formed a circle she bent her head and without taking her hand from mine rubbed her little nose against her glove. It is all so clear in my mind, and I can still hear the music of the quadrille from "The Maid of the Danube" to the strains of which all this took place.

Then came a second quadrille, which I was to dance with Sonichka. Taking a seat beside her, I felt terribly awkward and had no idea of what to say to her. When my silence became too prolonged I began to fear she might think I was a fool and was determined at any cost to prevent her from forming such an erroneous opinion of me. "*Vous êtes une habitante de Moscou*?"[1] I asked, and on receiving a reply in the affirmative, continued: "*Et moi, je n'ai encore jamais fréquenté la capitale*",[2] relying especially on the effect the word "fréquenté" would produce. However, though I felt that this was an excellent beginning and fully proved my fluency in French, I was incapable of continuing the conversation on the same level. It would be some time before it was our turn to dance, and the silence was renewed. I glanced at her anxiously, wishing to know what impression I had made and hoping that she would help me out. "Where did you find such a funny glove?" she suddenly asked, and the question afforded me immense pleasure and relief. I explained that the glove belonged to Karl Ivanych and went on to speak, even rather ironically, of Karl Ivanych himself, of how comical

[1] Are you an inhabitant of Moscow?

[2] As for me, I have never before frequented the capital.

he looked when he took off his red cap, of how he had once fallen from a horse right into a puddle in his green overcoat, and so on. The quadrille passed unnoticeably. This was all very well, but why had I spoken of Karl Ivanych with such sarcasm? Would I have really forfeited Sonichka's good opinion of me had I described him to her with the same love and respect I had for him?

When the quadrille ended Sonichka said *merci* to me as sweetly as though I truly deserved her gratitude. I was thrilled, beside myself with joy and could scarcely recognize myself: where had this courage, confidence and even audacity come from? "Nothing can embarrass me!" I said to myself, strolling mindlessly about the ballroom. "I am ready for anything!"

Seryozha asked me to be his *vis-à-vis*. "All right," I said. "I have no partner, but I'll find one." Glancing around the ballroom with a determined eye, I observed that all the young ladies were engaged except one tall girl who stood by the door of the drawing room. A tall young man was approaching her with the intention, as I concluded, of asking her to dance. He was only a few steps from her, while I was at the other end of the room. In the twinkling of an eye, sliding across the parquet gracefully, I covered the distance between myself and her and, clicking my heels, asked her for the *contre-danse* in a determined voice. The tall girl, smiling patronizingly, gave me her hand, while the young man was left without a partner.

I was so conscious of my power that I did not even take note of the young man's annoyance, but later learned that he had asked who that disheveled boy was who had darted past him and walked off with the young lady.

Chapter 22

THE MAZURKA

The young man whom I had cheated of a partner was leading, in the first couple of the mazurka. He jumped up, holding his partner's hand, and instead of doing the *pas*

de Basque which Mimi had taught us, simply ran forward; on reaching the corner he stopped for a moment, set his feet apart, stamped, turned and ran on with a skipping step.

As I had no partner for the mazurka, I sat behind Grandmother's tall wing chair, looking on.

"What is he doing?" I wondered. "That's not at all the way Mimi taught us to do it: she assured us everyone danced the mazurka on tiptoe, describing gliding, circular motions with their feet, but I see that's not the way it's danced at all. There, the Ivins, and Etienne, and everyone else, all dancing, and no one's doing the *pas de Basque*; and our Volodya's doing it the new way, too. Not bad at all!... And Sonichka's so darling! There she goes ..." I was in the best of spirits.

The mazurka was drawing to an end. Several elderly ladies and gentlemen were coming up to say goodbye to Grandmother and departing. The footmen, avoiding the dancers, were carefully carrying dishes into the back rooms. Grandmother was noticeably tired and spoke as though reluctantly, drawing out her words. The musicians began lazily playing the same tune for the thirtieth time. The tall girl I had danced with was doing one of the turns, noticed me and, smiling treacherously, hoping, perhaps, by so doing to please Grandmother, led Sonichka and one of the innumerable princesses up to me. "*Rose ou hortie*?" [1] she asked.

"Ah, here you are!" Grandmother said, turning around in her armchair. "Go on, my dear, go."

Although at that moment I would have rather crawled under Grandmother's chair than come out from behind it, how could I refuse? I stood up, said "*rose*" and glanced shyly at Sonichka. Before I had a chance to realize what was happening, someone's white-gloved hand took mine and the princess, smiling most pleasantly, streaked off, never suspecting that I hadn't the faintest idea of what I was to do with my feet.

I knew that the *pas de Basque* was out of place, unsuitable, and might even put me to shame completely, but

[1] Rose or nettle?

the familiar strains of the mazurka, acting upon my hearing, communicated a familiar direction to my acoustic nerves which, in turn, passed the movement on to my feet, and these latter, quite of their own accord and to the amazement of all present, began doing the fatal gliding, circular movements on tiptoe. As long as we were moving in a straight line things were not too bad, but at the turn I noticed that if I did not take care I would certainly be in front of my partner. To avoid such a mishap I stopped for a moment, intending to do the same kind of *pas* that the young man in the first couple was executing so gracefully. But at the very moment I set my feet apart and was about to jump, the princess, quickly circling around me, looked at my feet with an expression of blank inquiry and astonishment. That look undid me. I became so confused that instead of dancing I began stamping strangely, out of step with the music and everything else, and finally came to a standstill. All eyes were on me: some looked on in wonder, some with curiosity, some with derision, some with compassion; Grandmother alone looked on with complete indifference.

"*Il ne fallait pas danser, si vous ne savez pas*!" [1] Papa's angry voice sounded above my ear and pushing me aside lightly, he took my partner's hand, danced a turn with her in the old-fashioned way, to the murmured approval of the onlookers, and led her back to her seat. Just then the mazurka ended.

"Lord, why do You punish me so dreadfully?"

. . . . . .

Everyone despises me and will always despise me... Every road is closed to me: to friendship, love and honors ... all is lost! Why did Volodya make signs to me that all could see and that were of no help to me at all? Why did that horrid princess look at my feet like that? Why did Sonichka ... she is a darling, but why did she smile just then? Why did Papa get red in the face and seize me by my arm? Could he, too, have been ashamed of me? Oh, this is dreadful! Now if Mamma were here she would not have blushed for her Nikolenka... And my imagination

[1] You should not dance, if you do not know how.

carried me far away in pursuit of that beloved image. I recalled the meadow in front of the house, the tall lindens of the garden, the clear pond over which swallows circled, the blue sky hung with motionless, transparent white clouds, the fragrant sheaves of new-mown hay and many other peaceful and radiant memories crowded my troubled mind.

Chapter 23

AFTER THE MAZURKA

At supper the young man who had led the mazurka took a chair at our children's table and paid particular attention to me, which would have flattered my pride no end had I been able to feel anything after the misfortune that had befallen me. But the young man seemed determined to cheer me up at any cost: he jested with me, called me a fine fellow and, the moment none of the grown-ups were looking our way, poured wine from different bottles into my glass and insisted I drink it. Towards the end of supper, when the butler poured me a quarter of a glass of champagne from a bottle wrapped in a white napkin and when the young man insisted he fill my glass and made me down it in a gulp, I felt a pleasant warmth spread through my body, particular goodwill towards my jolly protector and began laughing at something loudly. Suddenly the strains of the *Grosswater*[1] reached us from the ballroom and everyone rose to leave the table. My friendship with the young man ended abruptly: he went off to join the grown-ups, while I, not daring to follow him, went up to where Mme Valakhina and her daughter were, curious to hear what they were talking about.

"Just half an hour more," Sonichka pleaded.

"No, really, my angel."

"For my sake, please," she begged.

"Will you really be happy if I'm ill tomorrow?" Mme Valakhina said and had the imprudence to smile.

[1] The last dance of a ball.– *Tr.*

"Ah, you agree! We're staying?" Sonichka cried, jumping up and down happily.

"You've coaxed me into it. Run along and dance ... and here is a partner for you," she said, pointing to me.

Sonichka gave me her hand and we ran into the ballroom.

The wine I had consumed and Sonichka's presence and cheerfulness made me forget all about the unfortunate incident of the mazurka. I executed the most amusing things with my feet: now imitating a horse I cantered about, raising my knees proudly, now I stamped like a ram that is angry at a dog, laughing uproariously all the while and not at all concerned about the impression I was making on the onlookers. Sonichka laughed incessantly, too: she laughed because we were spinning around and holding hands, she laughed at an elderly gentleman who slowly lifted his feet to step over a handkerchief, pretending that it was very difficult for him to do so, and nearly died of laughter when I leaped almost to the ceiling to prove my agility.

Passing through Grandmother's boudoir, I glanced at myself in the looking glass: my face was perspired, my hair disheveled, with most of it standing on end, but the general expression of my face was so happy, amicable and healthy that I was pleased with myself.

"If I were always like I am now," I said to myself, "I might be thought to be attractive."

But when I again looked at my partner's lovely face I found in it, besides the expression of gaiety, health and light-heartedness which I had admired in my own, such refined and exquisite beauty that I was annoyed with myself and realized how foolish it was of *me* to hope to attract the attention of such a magnificent creature.

I could not hope that my feelings would be reciprocated and did not even think of it: my heart overflowed with joy as it is. It did not occur to me that in return for the love which filled my heart with joy I could demand still greater happiness and desire anything more than that this feeling should never end. I was quite happy as it was. My heart fluttered like a dove, the blood rushed to it incessantly, and I felt like crying.

As we walked along the corridor, past the dark closet under the stairs, I glanced at it and thought: "What bliss it would be to live in this dark closet with her all my life! And so that no one should know that we lived here."

"Don't you think it's a wonderful party?" I said in a low, trembling voice and quickened my step, dreading not so much what I had said as what I was about to say.

"Yes ... it is!" she replied, turning her head towards me with such a frankly good-natured expression that I stopped being afraid.

"Especially since supper ... But if you only knew how sorry (I wanted to say sad, but did not dare) I am, because you'll soon be leaving and we shan't see each other again."

"Why won't we see each other again?" she said, gazing intently at the tips of her slippers and drawing her finger across the latticed screens we were passing. "On Tuesdays and Fridays Mamma and I drive along Tverskoi Boulevard. Don't you go out walking?"

"Then we'll certainly ask to go on Tuesday, and if I'm not allowed to I'll run off by myself, without a cap. I know the way."

"D'you know what?" Sonichka said suddenly, "I always say *tu* to boys who visit us often. Let us say *tu* to one another. Agreed?" she added, tossing her head and looking into my eyes.

We were entering the ballroom just then and the other, livelier part of the *Grossvater* was beginning.

"I agree ... with you," I said when the music and noise could drown out my words.

The *Grossvater* was over, but I had not managed to say a single phrase with *tu* in it, although I had kept trying to compose some in which this pronoun would be repeated several times. I lacked the courage to do so. I saw nothing and no one save Sonichka. I saw her ringlets being gathered up and tucked behind her ears, exposing parts of her forehead and temples I had not yet seen. I saw her being bundled up in the green shawl so completely as to leave only the tip of her nose showing. I noticed that if her rosy little fingers had not made an opening in front of her mouth she most certainly would have suffocated, and saw

her, as she walked down the stairs behind her mother, turn her head to us quickly, nod and vanish through the door.

Volodya, the Ivins, the young prince and I had all fallen in love with Sonichka and, standing on the stairs, followed her with our eyes. I do not know to whom she had nodded in particular, but at that moment I was firmly convinced that it had been to me.

When saying goodbye to the Ivins, I spoke a few words to Seryozha quite unconstrainedly and even somewhat coldly and shook hands with him. If he understood that from that day forward he had lost my affection and his power over me he probably regretted it, though he tried to appear quite indifferent.

For the first time in my life I had been unfaithful in love, and for the first time I experienced the sweetness of this feeling. I was happy to exchange a worn-out feeling of habitual devotion for a fresh feeling of love, so full of mystery and the unknown. Besides, falling out of love and in love at one and the same time means to love twice as ardently as before.

Chapter 24

IN BED

"How could I have been so passionately devoted to Seryozha and for so long?" I wondered as I lay in bed. "No! He never understood, never appreciated and was not worthy of my affection ... But Sonichka? What a darling she is!"

I jumped up on all fours, her face so vivid in my mind, pulled the covers over my head, tucked them in on all sides and when not a single crack remained lay down, conscious of a pleasant warmth, and gave myself up to sweet visions and memories. Staring unseeingly at the lining of my quilt, I saw her as clearly as I had an hour before. I was conversing with her in my mind, and although this conversation was quite senseless, it gave me indescribable pleasure.

These fancies were so lucid that I was kept awake by the sweet excitement and I wanted to share the excess of my joy with someone.

"Darling!" I said almost aloud and then turned sharply on my side. "Volodya! Are you asleep?"

"No," he replied sleepily, "why?"

"I'm in love, Volodya! I'm decidedly in love with Sonichka."

"What of it?" he replied, stretching.

"Oh, Volodya! You can't imagine how I feel... I was lying under the covers just now and so clearly, so clearly did I see her and speak to her that it's simply amazing. And you know what? When I lie here and think of her, heaven knows why, I become sad and want awfully to cry."

Volodya stirred.

"My only wish," I continued, "is always to be with her, always to see her and nothing more. Are you in love? Confess truthfully, Volodya."

Strangely, I wished everyone to be in love with Sonichka and everyone to speak about it.

"What's it to you?" Volodya said, turning to face me. "Perhaps."

"You don't want to sleep, you were pretending!" I cried, his shining eyes telling me that he had no thought of sleep at all, and threw off the covers. "Let's rather talk about her. Isn't she lovely?... So lovely that if she were to say: 'Nikolenka! Jump out of the window, or into the fire', I swear I'd jump this moment and gladly. Oh, how darling she is!" I added, imagining her there before me so vividly, and in order to enjoy this image to the full turned quickly on my other side and buried my head under the pillows. "I want awfully to cry, Volodya."

"What a fool!" he said with a smile and then, after a short pause: "I don't feel at all like you do. I think that if it were possible, I should first like to sit beside her and talk..."

"Ah, so you're in love, too?" I interrupted.

"Then," Volodya continued, smiling tenderly, "then I would kiss her sweet fingers, her eyes, lips, nose, feet, I'd kiss her all over..."

"How stupid!" I shouted from under the pillows.

"You don't understand a thing," Volodya said contemptuously.

"I do so, but you don't understand and you're talking nonsense," I said through my tears.

"Well, there's certainly no need to cry. You're just like a girl!"

■

Chapter 25

THE LETTER

On April 16th, nearly six months after the day I have described, my father came upstairs during our lessons and told us that we were leaving for the country with him that night.

My heart sank at the news and my thoughts at once turned to Mamma.

The cause of such an unexpected departure was the following letter:

Petrovskoye, April 12th

"I have only now, at 10 o'clock in the evening, received your kind letter of April 3rd and, as is my custom, am replying at once. Fyodor brought it from town yesterday, but as it was late he gave it to Mimi this morning. Mimi, however, on the pretext that I was not well and upset, kept it from me all day. True, I was slightly feverish and must confess that I have not been too well these past three days and have been in bed.

"Pray do not be alarmed, dearest. I feel rather well and if Ivan Vasilyevich permits me to I hope to get up tomorrow.

"Last Friday I went for a drive with the girls, but at the turn onto the high road, near the little bridge which has always terrified me, the horses got stuck in the mud. It was a lovely day and I thought I would walk as far as the high road while the carriage was being pulled out. On reaching the chapel, I felt very tired and sat down to rest,

but since about half an hour had elapsed while men were being summoned to pull out the carriage, I became chilled, particularly my feet, because I had on thin-soled shoes and I had got them wet. After dinner I had chills and was feverish, but went about as usual and after tea sat down to play duets with Lyubochka. (You won't recognize her: she has made such progress!) But imagine my surprise when I noticed I could not keep time. I began counting several times, but was decidedly confused and kept hearing a strange, humming noise. I counted: one, two, three, then, suddenly: eight, fifteen and, most important, I knew I was mistaken but could not correct myself. At last Mimi came to my aid and practically forced me to go to bed. So here, my dearest, is a detailed account of how I fell ill and how it is my own fault. The next day I had a rather high fever and our dear old Ivan Vasilyevich came and has stayed with us ever since and promises to let me out into the fresh air soon. What a darling old man Ivan Vasilyevich is! When I was burning up and delirious he sat by my bed all night, never getting a wink of sleep, and now, as he knows I am writing, he is with the girls in the sitting-room and, I can hear him from my bedroom, is telling them German fairy-tales, and they are dying of laughter as they listen to him.

"*La belle Flamande*, as you call her, has been staying with us for over a week, because her mother has gone away somewhere on a visit, and has by her ministrations convinced me of her most sincere devotion. She confides all her secrets of the heart to me. With her beautiful face, kind heart and youth she might have become a truly lovely young lady, were she in good hands, but the society in which she moves, according to her own account, will be the ruin of her. It has often occurred to me that had I not so many children of my own I might have done a good deed by taking her in.

"Lyubochka wished to write to you, too, but has already torn up three sheets of paper and says: 'I know what a tease Papa is: if I make a single tiny mistake he'll show it to everyone.' Katenka is as sweet as ever, Mimi is as kind and as tiresome. Now let us speak of serious matters: you write that your affairs are not going well this

winter and that you will be obliged to take the income from the Khabarovka estate. Truly, it seems strange to me that you should ask for my consent to this. Does not that which belongs to me belong equally to you?

"You are so kind, my dearest, that fearing to upset me, you conceal the true state of your affairs, but I can guess: no doubt you have lost a great deal at cards, and I assure you, I am not at all grieved by this. Therefore, if anything can be done to set things aright, pray do not give it much thought and do not torment yourself needlessly. I have never counted on your winnings for the children nor, forgive me, even on all of your estate. I am as little pleased by your winnings as I am troubled by your losses. I am only grieved by your unfortunate passion for cards which robs me of some of your tender affection and forces me to express such bitter truths as this, and God knows how painful it is for me to do so! I do not cease beseeching Him to deliver us ... not from poverty (what is poverty?), but from that dreadful situation in which the children's interests, which I shall be obliged to defend, would come into conflict with our own. Until now the Lord has heard my prayers: you have never overstepped that limit beyond which we should either have to sacrifice the fortune which no longer belongs to us, but to our children, or ... I shudder at the thought, yet this terrible misfortune always threatens us. Yes, it is a heavy cross that the Lord has given us both to bear!

"You also write of the boys and return to our old argument: you ask me to consent to their being sent to school. You know my objection to such an upbringing ...

"I do not know, my dearest, whether you will agree with me or not; in any case, I implore you, if you love me, to promise that till the end of my days and after my death, if it be God's will to part us, that this will never come to pass.

"You write that you will have to go to St. Petersburg on matters concerning our affairs. God be with you, my love, go and return soon. We all miss you so! The spring is truly wonderful: the winter door of the balcony has already been removed, the path to the greenhouse was perfectly dry four days ago, the peaches are in full bloom,

only a few patches of snow remain, the swallows have returned and Lyubochka brought me the first spring flowers today. The doctor says that in another three days or so I shall be quite well and should be able to go out in the fresh air and warm April sunshine. Farewell, my dearest, and please do not worry either about my illness or your losses. Finish your business as quickly as possible and you and the boys come to spend the summer with us. I am making wonderful plans as to how we shall spend it, and it wants only you for them to be fulfilled."

The next part of the letter was written in French in a close, uneven hand on another scrap of paper. I translate it word for word:

"Do not believe what I have written you concerning my illness. No one suspects how serious it is. I know for certain that I shall never leave my bed again. Do not lose any time, come at once and bring the children. Perhaps I shall still have time to embrace you and bless them once more: this is my one last wish. I know what a terrible blow I am inflicting upon you, but all the same, sooner or later, coming from me or from others, you would have received it. Let us try then to bear this misfortune with fortitude and trust in God's mercy. Let us submit to His will.

"Do not think that what I am writing are the delusions of a feverish imagination. On the contrary, my thoughts are extremely lucid at this moment and I am perfectly calm. Do not console yourself with the vain hope that these are the mistaken, vague premonitions of a timid soul. No, I feel, I know, and know because God has chosen to reveal this to me, that I have but a very short time left.

"Will my love for you and the children end with my last breath? I have come to understand that this is impossible. I feel too deeply at this moment to think that a feeling without which I cannot conceive of existence could ever be destroyed. My soul cannot exist without this love for you, and I know that it will exist forever, if only because a feeling like my love could not have come into being if it were destined to someday cease.

"I shall not be with you, but I am firmly convinced that

my love will never leave you and this thought is so comforting to my heart that I await the approach of death calmly and without fear.

"I am at peace, and God knows that I have always regarded and still regard death as a transition to a better life, but why then am I overcome by tears?... Why must the children be deprived of their beloved mother? Why inflict such a heavy, unexpected blow upon you? Why must I die when your love has made my life so infinitely happy?

"May His holy will be done.

"I cannot write, tears blind me. Perhaps I shall not see you again. I thank you, my precious love, for all the happiness with which you have surrounded me in this life. There, I shall beg the Lord to reward you. Farewell, my darling. Remember, though I will be no more, my love will never forsake you. Farewell, Volodya, farewell, my angel, farewell, my Nikolenka.

"Can it be that they will one day forget me?"

Enclosed in this letter was a note in French from Mimi, the contents of which are as follows:

"The sad premonitions of which she writes to you have been confirmed only too fully by what the doctor says. Last night she told me to have this letter taken to the post at once. Thinking that she had spoken in delirium, I waited until this morning and decided to break the seal. No sooner had I done so than Natalia Nikolayevna asked me what I had done about the letter and ordered me to burn it if it had not yet been posted. She keeps speaking of it and insists that it will kill you. Do not postpone your departure if you wish to see this angel while she is still with us. Excuse these scribbles. I have not slept for three nights. You know how I love her!"

Natalia Savishna, who spent the entire night of April 11th in our mother's bedroom, told me afterwards that, having written the first part of the letter, Mamma had laid it beside her on the little table and had fallen asleep.

"I confess," Natalia Savishna said, "that I dozed off in the armchair and my knitting dropped out of my hands. In my sleep, it must have been after midnight, I thought I heard her speaking. I opened my eyes and looked: there

she was, my darling, sitting up in bed, her hands clasped like this, and tears streaming from her eyes. 'Is it all over then?' was all she said and buried her face in her hands. I jumped up and asked: 'What is the matter?'"

"'Oh, Natalia Savishna, if you only knew whom I have just seen.'

"However much I questioned her, she said nothing more to me but only told me to move the little table closer, then wrote a while longer, ordered me to seal the letter in her presence and send it off at once. After that she grew ever worse."

Chapter 26

WHAT AWAITED US AT THE COUNTRY HOUSE

On April 18th we alighted from a carriage at the porch of our Petrovskoye country house. On leaving Moscow, Papa had been preoccupied and when Volodya had asked: "Is Mamma ill?" he had looked at him sadly and nodded silently. During the journey he had grown noticeably calmer, but the closer we got to home the sadder his face became, and when, alighting from the carriage, he asked Foka, who had come running up breathlessly: "Where is Natalia Nikolayevna?" his voice was unsteady and there were tears in his eyes. Good old Foka stole a look at us, lowered his eyes, opened the front door, averted his face and replied:

"Madame has not left her room these six days."

Milka, who, as I later learned, had not ceased howling dolefully since the day Mamma fell ill, rushed joyfully at my father, fawning upon him, yelping, licking his hands, but he pushed her aside and went through the drawing room and from there to the sitting room, from which a door led directly to the bedroom. The closer he approached this room, the more apparent his anxiety became in all his movements. On entering the sitting room, he proceeded on tiptoe, scarcely daring to breathe, and crossed himself before he could bring himself to touch the

handle of the closed door. Just then Mimi, dishevelled and tearful, hurried in from the corridor, "Oh, Pyotr Alexandrovich!" she whispered in true despair and then, observing that Papa was turning the door handle, she added almost inaudibly: "You cannot go in here, you must go through the maids' room."

O how dreadfully did this affect my childish imagination, attuned to sorrow by terrible premonition!

We proceeded to the maids' room. In the corridor we encountered the idiot Akim, whose grimacing had always amused us, yet at this moment he not only did not seem funny to me, but nothing struck me as painfully as the sight of his vacant, indifferent face. In the maids' room two maids who were sitting at their sewing rose slightly to bow to us with such sad faces that I became terrified. Passing then through Mimi's room, Papa opened the bedroom door and we entered. To the right of the door were two windows closely covered with shawls. At one of these Natalia Savishna, her spectacles on her nose, sat knitting a stocking. She did not kiss us, as she usually did, but only rose a little, looked at us over the rims of her spectacles and tears streamed down her cheeks. I did not at all like the way everyone would begin to weep at the sight of us when until that moment they had been quite composed.

To the left of the door was a screen, behind the screen a bed, a little table, a small chest full of medicines and a large armchair in which the doctor was dozing. Standing beside the bed was a young, very fair and exceptionally beautiful girl in a white morning gown who, having pushed her sleeves up a bit, was holding an ice pack to Mamma's head, which I could not see at the moment. This young lady was *la belle Flamande* of whom Mamma had written and who was later to play such an important role in the life of our entire family. The moment we entered she took one hand from Mamma's head and arranged the folds of her gown over her bosom, then said in a whisper: "She is unconscious."

I was in great distress at that moment, yet unwittingly noted every detail. The room was dim, hot and filled with a mingled odor of mint, eau de Cologne, camo-

mile and Hoffmann's drops. This odor struck me so forcibly that not only when I perceive it, but even when I recall it my imagination instantly transports me to that dismal, close room and revives the minutest details of that terrible moment.

Mamma's eyes were open, but she saw nothing... O I shall never forget that terrible gaze! It expressed such suffering!

We were led away.

When I later asked Natalia Savishna about my mother's last moments, this is what she told me:

"After you were led away she tossed about for a long time, my poor darling, as if something were choking her here. Then her dear head slipped off the pillows and she dozed off as quietly and peacefully as an angel from heaven. I went out for a moment to see why no one had brought her brew and when I returned she, my sweet, had thrown the covers all about and kept beckoning to your dear papa to come close. He bent over her, but she didn't seem to have the strength to say what she wished to. She opened her lips and began moaning again: 'Oh, God! Dear Lord! The children! The children!' I wanted to run and fetch you, but Ivan Vasilyevich stopped me and said: 'It will only upset her more, 'tis best not to.' After that she would just raise her dear hand and drop it again. God only knows what she meant by it. I think that she was blessing you in your absence. But it must have been God's will (before the end) not to let her see her dear children. Then she rose up, my darling, held her hands like this and suddenly began to speak in a voice I can't bear to recall: 'Mother of God, do not forsake them!...' And then the pain reached her heart, you could see by her eyes how dreadfully she suffered, poor soul. She fell back on the pillows, clenched the sheet between her teeth and the tears, my dear sir, the tears just streamed."

"And then?" I asked.

Natalia Savishna was unable to continue. She turned her head aside and wept bitterly.

Mamma had died in terrible agony.

Chapter 27

GRIEF

Late in the evening of the following day I felt I wanted to look at her once more. Overcoming an instinctive feeling of dread, I opened the door softly and tiptoed into the salon. On a table in the middle of the room was the coffin, around it were tapers that had burned low in their tall silver candlesticks. In the far corner sat the chanter, reading a Psalter in a subdued, monotonous voice.

I stopped at the door and stood looking in but my eyes were so swollen from weeping and my nerves so unstrung that I could not make anything out. Everything seemed to run strangely together: the light, the brocade, the velvet, the tall candlesticks, the small pink, lace-edged pillow, the frontlet, the ribboned cap and something else that was translucent and wax-like. I climbed on a chair to have a close look at her face but in the place where it should have been I again saw the same pale, yellowish, translucent object. I could not believe that this was her face. I looked at it fixedly and little by little began to recognize the dear, familiar features. I shuddered in terror when I became convinced that this was she. But why were the closed eyes so sunken? Why the dreadful pallor and a dark spot visible through the transparent skin of one cheek? Why was the expression of her face so stern and cold? Why were the lips so pale and their shape so perfect, so regal and expressing such unearthly calm it sent cold shivers down my head and spine when I looked closely at them?

I gazed and felt an incomprehensible, irresistible force drawing my eyes towards this lifeless face. I could not take my eyes from it, while my imagination conjured up scenes full of life and happiness. I kept forgetting that the dead body which lay before me and upon which I gazed vacantly as upon an object that had nothing in common with my memories was *she*. I imagined her now in one, now in another situation: lively, gay, smiling. Then I would suddenly be struck by some feature of the pale face on which my eyes were resting: I would recall the

dreadful reality, shudder, but continue to look. And once again visions would replace reality, and once again a consciousness of reality would destroy the dreams. At last my imagination grew weary and ceased deceiving me. A consciousness of reality also vanished, and I became oblivious of my surroundings. I do not know how long I remained in this state, nor what it actually was. I simply know that for a time I ceased to be aware of my existence and experienced a lofty, ineffably sweet, sad rapture.

Perhaps in departing for a better world her beautiful soul had turned to look back sadly at the one in which she was leaving us. It saw my sorrow, took pity on it and on wings of love, with a heavenly smile of compassion, descended to earth to comfort and bless me.

The door creaked and another chanter entered to relieve the first one. The sound roused me and the first thought that entered my mind was that as I was not crying but stood on a chair in an attitude that was in no way pathetic, the chanter might take me for a heartless boy who had climbed up on the chair out of commiseration or curiosity. I crossed myself, bowed and burst into tears.

Recalling my emotions now, I find that only that moment of forgetfulness was one of genuine grief. Before and after the funeral I did not cease crying and was sad, but I am ashamed to think back on that sadness, for it was always accompanied by some selfish feeling: either a desire to show others that I was more distressed than anyone else or concern about the impression I was making on others, or idle curiosity, which made me observe Mimi's cap and the faces of those around me. I despised myself for not experiencing a feeling of grief to the exclusion of everything else and tried to conceal all other feelings. This made my sorrow insincere and unnatural. Moreover, I experienced a strange satisfaction in knowing that I was unhappy and tried to stimulate this sense of unhappiness, and this egotistical feeling, more than any other, stifled my true sorrow.

Having slept through the night soundly and peacefully, as is always the case after some great distress, I awoke with dry eyes and calmed nerves. At ten o'clock we were called to hear the requiem before the coffin was borne

away. The room was filled with domestics and peasant serfs, all of them weeping, who had come to pay their last respects to their mistress. During the service I wept, crossed myself and bowed to the ground decorously but did not pray in my heart and was actually unmoved. I was concerned about my new suit that had been given me that day being very tight under the arms, thought about taking care not to dirty the knees of my pantaloons too much when I kneeled and furtively observed all those who were present. My father stood at the head of the coffin, was as white as a sheet and held back his tears with obvious effort. His tall figure in a black dress-coat, his pale, expressive face and his movements, as always graceful and assured when he crossed himself, bowed, touching the floor with his finger-tips, took a taper from the priest's hand or went up to the coffin, were striking, but I don't know why this was exactly what I disliked about him: his being able to appear so striking at such a moment. Mimi stood leaning against the wall and seemed hardly able to support herself. Her dress was crumpled and full of lint, her cap was awry, her swollen eyes were red, her head shook. She did not cease sobbing in a heart-rending voice and kept burying her face in her handkerchief and her hands. It seemed to me she did it so that by hiding her face from the onlookers she might have a moment's respite from her feigned sobbing. I remembered that the day before she had told my father that Mamma's death was such a terrible blow to her that she could never hope to recover from it, that it had deprived her of everything, that this angel (as she called Mamma) had just before her death remembered her and had expressed a desire to provide for her and Katenka's future. She shed bitter tears as she related this and perhaps her sorrow was genuine, but it was not pure and exclusive. Lyubochka, in a black frock trimmed with weepers, her face wet from tears, stood with her head bowed and occasionally glanced at the coffin, at which her face expressed nothing but childish terror. Katenka stood beside her mother and despite her long face was as rosy as ever. Volodya's frank disposition was frank in grief, too: now he stood lost in thought, his eyes fixed

steadily on some object, now his lips would suddenly begin to quiver and he would hastily cross himself and bow. All the outsiders who attended the funeral were insufferable to me. The words of condolence they addressed to my father, saying that she would be better off there, that she was not made for this world, evoked in me a feeling of annoyance.

What right had they to speak of her and mourn for her? Some, referring to us, called us *orphans*. As if it was not common knowledge that children who had lost their mother were called by that name! They were probably pleased to be the first to call us by this name, just as people are generally in a hurry to be the first to call a new bride *Madame*.

In a far corner of the salon, almost hidden behind the open door of the pantry, a bent, gray-haired old woman kneeled. Hands joined in prayer and eyes raised to the heavens, she did not weep, but prayed. Her soul rose up to God, she begged Him to let her join the one whom she had loved above all others on earth and earnestly hoped that this would be soon.

"This is who really loved her!" I thought and felt ashamed of myself.

The requiem ended. The face of the deceased was uncovered and all present, excepting ourselves, approached the coffin in turn and kissed her forehead.

One of the last to come up to pay her respects was a peasant woman carrying a pretty five-year-old girl whom heaven only knows why she had brought along. At that moment I dropped my wet handkerchief and was about to pick it up, but just as I bent over I was startled by a terrible, piercing cry full of such horror that were I to live to be a hundred I should never forget it and whenever I think of it a chill runs down my spine. I raised my head: the very same peasant woman stood on a footstool beside the coffin and could scarcely restrain the child in her arms who was pushing away with her hands, her frightened face thrown back, staring wildly at the dead countenance and screaming in a frenzied voice. I cried out in a voice which, I believe, was even more dreadful than that which had startled me and ran out of the room.

It was only at that moment that I realized the source of the strong, oppressive odor which, mingling with the scent of incense, filled the room, and the thought that the face which but a few days before had been so full of beauty and tenderness, the face of her whom I loved above all others on earth could evoke horror, seemed to bring the bitter truth home to me for the very first time and filled my heart with despair.

Chapter 28

THE LAST SAD MEMORIES

Mamma was no more, yet our life continued as usual: we went to bed and rose at the same hours and in the same rooms; there were morning and evening tea, dinner and supper, all at the accustomed times; the chairs and tables were in the same places; nothing in the house or in our way of life had changed; only she was not there...

It seemed to me that after such a misfortune everything ought to have changed. Our accustomed way of life seemed to me an insult to her memory and too vividly reminded me of her absence.

On the day before the funeral I felt sleepy after dinner and went to Natalia Savishna's room, intending to lie down under the warm quilt on her soft featherbed. When I entered Natalia Savishna was lying on her bed, apparently asleep. At the sound of my footsteps she rose up, threw off the woolen shawl that covered her head to keep away the flies and, straightening her cap, seated herself on the edge of the bed.

As I had often before come to take a nap in her room after dinner she guessed why I had come and said, rising from the bed:

"What is it? I suppose you've come to rest a while, haven't you, my love? Lie down."

"Oh, no, Natalia Savishna," I said, restraining her hand. "That's not why I've come ... I just dropped in ... and you're tired: you'd better lie down."

"No, sir, I've had enough sleep," she said (I knew she had not slept for three days and three nights). "And this is no time for sleeping," she added with a deep sigh.

I longed to speak to Natalia Savishna of our misfortune. I knew her sincerity and love, and thus it would be a comfort to me to have a good cry with her.

"Natalia Savishna," I said after a short pause as I sat down on the bed, "did you expect it?"

The old woman looked at me with perplexity and surprise, apparently not understanding why I had asked her this.

"Who could have expected it?" I repeated.

"Ah, dear sir," she said, glancing at me with the tenderest compassion, "I cannot even believe it now, to say nothing of expecting it. Now an old woman like me should have had her old bones laid to rest long ago, but see what I've had to endure: the old master, your grandfather, Prince Nikolai Mikhailovich, may he rest in peace, my two brothers and sister Annushka, I've buried them all, and they were all younger than me, dear sir, and now, surely for my sins, I'm fated to survive her, too. It is His holy will! He has taken her because she was worthy and He needs good souls there, too." I was pleasantly struck by this simple thought and drew closer to Natalia Savishna. She joined her hands on her bosom and raised her eyes. Her sunken, moist eyes expressed a deep but tranquil sorrow. She firmly trusted that God had not parted her for long from the one on whom the full power of her love had been lavished for so many years.

"Yes, dear sir, it seems such a short time since I dandled and swaddled her and since she called me Nasha. She would come running to me, throw her little arms around me, kiss me and say:

"'Nasha, my pretty, my little chickadee.'

"And I would tease and say:

"'Oh, no, mistress, you don't love me. Just wait till you grow up and marry, you'll forget your Nasha.' She would ponder over this and say, 'No, then I'll not marry at all if I can't take Nasha with me. I'll never leave Nasha.' But she's left me and didn't wait for me. And, oh, did she ever love me, poor soul! But whom didn't she love, to tell the

truth? No, dear sir, you must never forget your dear mother. She was no ordinary person but an angel from heaven. When her soul reaches heaven she will still love you there and will still rejoice in you."

"Why do you say when her soul reaches heaven, Natalia Savishna?" I asked. "I should think it's already there."

"No, sir," Natalia Savishna said, lowering her voice and moving closer to me on the bed. "Her soul is here now."

And she pointed upward. She spoke in a near whisper and with such feeling and certainty that I raised my eyes involuntarily and looked at the cornices in search of something.

"Before a righteous soul goes to heaven it must pass through forty trials, dear sir, for forty days, and may still be in its own house..."

She spoke on in this way for some time, speaking so simply and with such conviction as though she were relating the most ordinary things which she herself had witnessed and which could never have raised the slightest doubt in anyone's mind. I listened to her with bated breath, and although I did not quite understand what she was saying I trusted her implicitly.

"Yes, sir, she's here now, looking at us and maybe even listening to what we're saying," Natalia Savishna concluded.

Then, bowing her head, she fell silent. She had need of a handkerchief to dry her falling tears. She rose, looked me full in the face and said in a voice trembling with emotion:

"God has brought me many steps nearer to Himself through this. What is there left for me here now? Whom have I to live for? Whom have I to love?"

"But don't you love us?" I said reproachfully, scarcely able to hold back my tears.

"The Lord knows how I love you, my darlings, but I have never loved anyone as I loved her, nor can I."

She was unable to continue, averted her face and sobbed loudly.

No longer could I think of sleep. We sat opposite each other silently and wept.

Foka entered the room. Seeing our condition and apparently not wishing to disturb us, he stopped by the door and looked at us timidly.

"What is it, Foka dear?" Natalia Savishna asked, dabbing at her eyes.

"A pound and a half of raisins, four pounds of sugar and three pounds of rice for the *kutya*,[1] m'am."

"I'll just be a minute, sir," Natalia Savishna said, hurriedly taking a pinch of snuff and going quickly over to a chest. The last traces of sorrow brought about by our conversation vanished when she assumed her duties, which she considered most important.

"Why four pounds?" she grumbled, getting out the sugar and weighing it on a steelyard. "Three and a half will do."

And she took several lumps off the scale.

"What's all this? Just yesterday I gave them eight pounds of rice and now they call for more. I want you to know, Foka Demidych, that I won't give you any more rice. That Vanka is glad of the commotion in the house. He thinks maybe it'll go unnoticed. Oh, no, I won't let anything pass that concerns the master's property. Who ever heard of such a thing: eight pounds!"

"What'll I do, m'am? He says it's all used up."

"Oh, here, take it! Here! Let him have it!"

I was amazed at the time by this change from tender emotion, with which she had been speaking to me, to grumbling and petty thrift. Thinking back, I later understood that regardless of her own emotional state, she was still able to give her mind to her duties, while force of habit had impelled her to busy herself with her usual occupations. Her grief was so profound that she did not find it necessary to conceal the fact that she was able to attend to other matters. Indeed, she would not even have understood how such an idea might have occurred to anyone.

Vanity is a sentiment most incompatible with true sorrow, and yet this feeling is so firmly grafted on to human nature that rarely does even the most profound sorrow

[1] A dish of boiled rice and raisins served at a funeral feast. – *Tr.*

banish it. Vanity in sorrow is expressed by a desire to appear either grief-stricken or unhappy, or staunch, and these base desires, to which we do not confess but which hardly ever, even in the greatest sorrow, leave us, deprive it of its strength, dignity and sincerity. But Natalia Savishna was so deeply afflicted by her misfortune that her soul had not a single desire left and she went on living from force of habit alone.

Having given the necessary provisions to Foka and having reminded him about the pie that was to be baked for the clergy, she let him go, picked up her knitting and sat down beside me again.

Our conversation was resumed and we wept again and dried our tears again.

These talks with Natalia Savishna were repeated every day. Her gentle tears and calm, pious words offered consolation and relief.

But we were soon parted. Three days after the funeral the entire household moved to Moscow and I was never fated to see her again.

Grandmother did not receive the terrible news until our arrival and her grief was extreme. We were not allowed to go to her room because she was beside herself for a week and the doctors feared for her life, particularly as she not only refused to take any medicine, but did not speak to anyone, did not sleep and took no food. Sometimes, when sitting alone in the room in her armchair, she would suddenly begin to laugh, then to sob without any tears, had convulsions and screamed meaningless or frightful words in a frenzied voice. This was the first true sorrow she had ever known and this sorrow brought her to despair. She had to blame someone for her misfortune and she would utter dreadful words, threaten someone violently, spring up from her armchair, stride rapidly up and down the room and then would fall senseless.

Once I entered her room: she was sitting in her armchair as always and seemed quite relaxed, yet I was amazed by the expression of her eyes. Her eyes were wide open, though her gaze was vacant and dull: she was looking straight at me but evidently did not see me. A slow smile touched her lips and she began to speak in a gentle,

loving voice: "Come here, my love, come here, my angel." I thought she was speaking to me and approached but she was not looking at me. "Ah, if you only knew, my darling girl, how I have suffered and how happy I am now that you have come ..." I realized that she imagined she saw Mamma and stood still. "And they told me you were no more," she continued with a frown. "What nonsense! As though you could die before me," and she burst into terrible, hysterical laughter.

Only people capable of loving deeply can experience deep sorrow, but that same need to love acts as an antidote to grief and cures them. That is why the human spirit is more tenacious of life than the body. Grief never kills.

A week later Grandmother was able to weep and she began feeling better. Her first thought when she regained her faculties was of us and her love for us increased. We stayed close by her chair. She wept softly, spoke of Mamma and caressed us fondly.

No one could have thought, on seeing Grandmother's sorrow, that she exaggerated it, and the expression of this sorrow was heartfelt and touching. Yet, I know not why, I felt more sympathy for Natalia Savishna and am still convinced that no one loved Mamma as sincerely and purely or mourned her as did this simple-hearted and affectionate creature.

The happy days of childhood ended with the death of my mother and a new period began, that of adolescence, but since my recollections of Natalia Savishna, whom I never saw again and who had had such a strong and beneficient influence on my disposition and the development of my sensibility, belong to the first period, I shall add a few more words about her and her death.

After our departure, as I was later told by those who had remained in the country house, she was depressed for want of occupation. Though all the chests were still in her charge and she never ceased rummaging about in them, arranging things, airing them and laying them out, she missed the noise and bustle of a country house inhabited by the master's family to which she had been accustomed since childhood. Grief, a change in her way of life and the

absence of activity soon brought on an illness of old age towards which she had been disposed. Exactly a year after my mother's death she came down with dropsy and took to her bed.

I believe it was difficult for Natalia Savishna to go on living and still more difficult to face death alone, without kith or kin, in the large, empty house in Petrovskoye. Everyone in the household was fond of and respected Natalia Savishna but she was intimate with no one and prided herself on this. She believed that in her position of housekeeper, enjoying the full trust of her masters and in charge of so many chests full of all sorts of goods, friendship with anyone would inevitably lead to partiality and to criminal connivance. For this reason, or perhaps because she had nothing in common with the other servants, she kept apart from them and said she had no friends or relations in the house and would not let anything pass that concerned the master's property.

She sought and found solace in revealing her feelings to God in fervent prayer, but sometimes in a moment of weakness to which we all are subject, when tears and the sympathy of a living creature are a person's greatest comfort, she would take her little lapdog onto her bed (which licked her hands and fixed its yellow eyes on her), speak to it and weep softly as she stroked it. When the dog would begin to howl plaintively she would try to quieten it by saying: "Now, now, I know without your telling me that I'll die soon."

A month before her death she took a length of white calico, white muslin and pink ribbons from her own chest; with the help of the girl who looked after her she made herself a white gown and a cap and left the most detailed instructions for her funeral. She also went through the masters' chests and drew up a precise inventory which she handed over to the stewardess. Then she took out two silk gowns, an ancient shawl that my grandmother had given her and my grandfather's gold-stitched tunic which had also been given to her to dispose of as she pleased. Thanks to her care the gold stitching and crownlace on the tunic were as good as new and the cloth was not moth-eaten.

Before she died she expressed a desire to have one of the gowns, the pink one, given to Volodya to be made into a dressing-gown or under-tunic and the other, a puce plaid, to me for the same purpose, while the shawl was for Lyubochka. She bequeathed the tunic to whichever of us should first become an officer. All her other possessions and money, save forty rubles which she set aside for her funeral and funeral feast, she bequeathed to her brother. Her brother, who had been granted his freedom long before, lived in a distant province and led a most dissolute life. That was why she had kept up no ties with him during her lifetime.

When Natalia Savishna's brother showed up to claim his legacy and found that all the property left by the deceased was only worth twenty-five rubles in banknotes he refused to believe it and declared that it was impossible that an old woman who had spent sixty years in a wealthy family, the keeper of everything in it, who had lived frugally all her life, watchful of every last scrap, should have left nothing. But this was indeed so.

Natalia Savishna suffered through her illness for two months, bearing the pain with true Christian fortitude: she did not grumble or complain but only, as was her wont, kept appealing to God. An hour before her death, in a state of serene joy, she was confessed, received the last sacrament and extreme unction.

She begged forgiveness of the household staff for any wrong she might have done them and asked her confessor, Father Vasily, to tell us that she did not know how to thank us enough for our kindness and asked us to forgive her if, through stupidity, she had ever offended anyone. "But I was never a thief. I can say that I never took so much as a bit of thread belonging to the master." This was the one virtue she prided herself on.

Having put on the gown and cap she had prepared and leaning her elbow on the pillows, she conversed with the priest until the very end. Recalling that she had left nothing to the poor, she took out ten rubles and asked him to distribute it in the parish. Then she crossed herself, lay back and breathed her last, a happy smile and God's name on her lips.

She left this world without regret, did not fear death and welcomed it as a blessing. One often hears this spoken of, but how seldom is it actually so! Natalia Savishna did not have to fear death, for she died steadfast in her faith, having fulfilled the Gospel's commandments. Her entire life had been one of pure, selfless love and self-sacrifice.

What if her beliefs might have been more lofty, her life directed towards a higher aim? Is this pure soul less worthy then of love and awe?

She accomplished the best and greatest deed in this life: she died without regret or fear.

She was buried, according to her wish, near the chapel that rises over my mother's grave. The little mound overgrown with nettles and burdock beneath which she lies has a black railing around it and I never forget to go from the chapel to this railing and bow down to the ground.

Sometimes I pause in silence between the chapel and the black railing. Painful memories suddenly awaken in my soul. The thought occurs to me: is it possible that Providence united me with these two beings only that I should for ever mourn their loss?...

ADOLESCENCE

Chapter 1

TRAVELLING WITH HIRED HORSES

Once again two vehicles are drawn up at the porch of the Petrovskoye country house: one is a carriage in which Mimi, Katenka, Lyubochka and a maid take their seats with the steward Yakov *himself* on the box; the other is a britzka in which are seated Volodya and I, and the footman Vasily, a serf lately taken into service from the village.

Papa, who is to follow us to Moscow in several days, stands hatless on the porch, making the sign of the cross at the carriage window and the britzka.

"Well, God bless you! Go on!" Yakov and the drivers (we have our own drivers) pull off their caps and cross themselves "Ho, there! God be with us!" The carriage and the britzka begin to bounce on the uneven road and the birch-trees of the large alley rush past us one after another. I am not at all sad. In my mind's eye I do not turn to that which I am leaving, but to that which awaits me. As I draw farther away from the objects connected with the painful memories that have until now filled my imagination, these memories fade and swiftly give way to a happy consciousness of life full of vigor, freshness and hope.

I have seldom spent several days, I will not say merrily, I was still somehow ashamed to

give myself up to merriment, but so pleasantly, so well, as the four days of our journey.

My eyes were confronted neither by the closed door of my mother's room, which I could not pass without a shudder, nor by the closed top of the grand piano which no one approached and which was even regarded with a kind of dread, nor by mourning garments (we all wore ordinary travelling clothes), nor by all those things which vividly reminding me of my irreparable loss made me avoid any manifestation of life for fear of somehow offending *her* memory. Here, on the contrary, endlessly new, picturesque scenes and objects draw and divert my attention, while the spring arouses in my soul happy feelings of contentment with the present and bright hopes for the future.

Very early in the morning the merciless and, as people always are in a new position, over-zealous Vasily pulls off my blanket and insists that it is time to start out and that all is in readiness. No matter how I cringe, or pretend, or fume to prolong for at least another quarter of an hour my sweet morning slumber, I see by Vasily's determined face that he is implacable and is prepared to pull the covers off me another twenty times, so I jump up and run out into the yard to wash up.

In the passage the samovar is already boiling, with Mitka, the postilion, his face as red as a beet, blowing on the coals; it is damp and foggy outside, as though steam were rising from a pungent dung heap; the sun's bright, cheerful rays light up the eastern part of the sky, and the thatched roofs of the large sheds surrounding the yard are shiny from the dew that covers them. Beneath them one can see our horses, tethered to the mangers, and hear their stolid munching. A shaggy mongrel, having curled up before dawn on a dry heap of manure, stretches lazily and, wagging its tail, trots off across the yard. A busy peasant woman opens a creaking gate, drives the pensive cows into the street where one can already hear the sound of hooves and the lowing and bleating of the herd, and exchanges a few words with a sleepy neighbor. Philip, his shirtsleeves rolled up, turns the wheel, raising a bucket from the deep well and splashing the clear water as he

pours it into an oaken trough beside which some ducks are already paddling about in a puddle; and I look with pleasure at the dignified, broad-bearded face of Philip and at the large sinews and muscles that stand out so sharply on his powerful bare arms whenever he makes any effort.

Behind the partition where Mimi and the girls have slept and through which we conversed the previous evening some movement is heard. Masha, the maid, carrying various objects which she attempts to conceal from our curious eyes with her skirts, whisks past us ever more frequently until at last the door opens and we are called in to tea.

Vasily, in a fit of misdirected zeal, keeps dashing into the room, carrying now this out, now that, winks at us and implores Maria Ivanovna to make an early start. The horses have been put to the carriage and manifest their impatience by occasionally jingling their bells; the portmanteaux, chests, boxes and caskets are again packed in and we take our places. But each time we find a pile in the britzka instead of a seat, so that we cannot fathom how all this had been packed in the previous day nor how we are now to sit; in particular, a walnut tea caddy with a triangular lid which is handed in to the britzka and is placed under me arouses my indignation. But Vasily says it will settle and I am compelled to believe him.

The sun has just risen above a dense white cloud which covers all of the east and everything about is bathed in a quietly-radiant light. Everything is so beautiful about me and my heart is at peace ... The road winds on ahead as a broad, wild ribbon between fields of dry stubble and sparkling, dew-drenched new corn; here and there by the wayside is a gloomy black willow or a young birch with small, sticky leaves that casts a long, motionless shadow on the dry, clayey ruts and the short green grass of the roadside... The monotonous rumble of the wheels and the jingling bells do not drown out the songs of the skylarks which hover low over the road. The smell of moth-eaten cloth, dust and something sour peculiar to our britzka is overpowered by the fragrance of the morning, and I feel in my heart a happy excitement, a longing for action that is a sign of true delight.

I had no time to say my prayers at the post house but, as I have already noted on many occasions that on the day on which I for some reason or other forget to perform this duty I meet with some mishap. I try to remedy my omission: I take off my cap, face towards the corner of the britzka, say my prayers and cross myself under my jacket so that no one shall see. But thousands of various objects distract my attention and I absent-mindedly repeat the same words of the prayer several times over.

There on the footpath winding beside the road are some slowly-moving figures: the women are pilgrims. Their heads are covered by dirty shawls, they carry birch-bark hampers on their backs, their legs are swathed in filthy, ragged cloth leggings and they wear heavy bast shoes. Swinging their staffs measuredly and scarcely turning to glance at us, they proceed with slow, heavy steps in single file and I begin to wonder: where and whyfore are they going? Will their journey be a long one, and how soon will the tall shadows they cast on the road join the shadow of the willow they must pass? Here is a carriage pulled by four post horses coming swiftly towards us. In another two seconds the faces two feet away which looked at us with affable curiosity have flashed by, and it seems strange that these faces have nothing in common with me and that never, perhaps, shall I see them again.

Here, on one side of the road, come two sweating, shaggy, haltered horses with the traces knotted under the breech-bands, and behind them, his long legs and feet in big boots astride a horse that has on its neck a shaft bow with a bell that occasionally tinkles faintly, is a young post-boy, his felt hat cocked over one ear and singing a mournful song. His face and attitude convey such indolent, carefree ease that it seems to me the greatest of joys to be a post-boy, to be on a return trip and to be singing sad songs. There, far beyond the ravine, seen against the light-blue sky is a village church with a green roof; there is the village, the red roof of the manor house and a green orchard. Who lives in the house? Are there children, a father, a mother, a tutor? Why should we not drive up to this house and get to know its inhabitants? Here is a long wagon train of huge carts, each drawn by three

well-fed, stout-legged horses which we are forced to drive around. "What're you carting?" Vasily asks the first carrier who, dangling his huge feet over the side and flourishing a small whip, stares after us stupidly for a long time, replying something at last, when it is impossible to hear him. "What're your goods?" Vasily addresses a second cart where in the boxed-off break another carrier lies under a new mat. A blond head with a red face and a small russet beard pokes out from under the mat for a moment, casts an indifferent, contemptuous glance at our britzka and disappears again, and it occurs to me that evidently these carriers do not know who we are, where we come from or where we are going.

For about an hour and a half, absorbed in various observations, I pay no attention to the crooked numerals on the mile posts. But now the sun begins to beat down more hotly on my head and back, the road becomes more dusty, the triangular lid of the tea caddy begins to cause me acute discomfort, and I shift my position several times: I become hot, cramped and bored. My attention is entirely focused on the mile posts and on the numerals marked on them; I begin to calculate as to when we might reach the post stage. "Eight miles are one-third of twenty-four, and it's twenty-seven to Lipets, therefore, we've covered one-third and how much more?" and so on.

"Vasily," I say when I notice he is beginning to *nod* on the box, "let me up on the box, my good man."

Vasily agrees. We change places; he immediately begins to snore and sprawls out so that there is no longer any room left in the britzka for anyone else, while from the high vantage point I occupy there opens up before me the most delightful of scenes: our four horses, Neruchinskaya, Dyachok, Levaya, the shaft-horse, and Aptekar, all of whose traits down to the minutest detail and nuance are familiar to me.

"Why is Dyachok on the right side and not on the left today, Philip?" I venture somewhat timidly.

"Dyachok?"

"And Neruchinskaya isn't pulling at all," I say.

"You can't harness Dyachok on the left," Philip says,

disregarding my last remark. "He's not the kind of horse to be harnessed on the left side. On the left you want a horse that's a horse, you know, and he's not that kind of a horse."

At this Philip leans over to the right and, jerking the reins as hard as he can, begins to lash poor Dyachok across the tail and legs with a peculiar upward swing, and though Dyachok is doing his best and is pulling the whole britzka, Philip abandons this exercise only when he feels the need to rest and push his hat, for no good reason, askew, although until then it had sat very snugly and well on his head. I take advantage of such a propitious moment and ask Philip to let me *drive*. Philip gives me first one rein, then another; at last all six reins and the whip pass into my hands and I am utterly happy. I try to imitate Philip in every way and ask him whether I am doing well, but it usually ends with his being dissatisfied with me: he says that that one is pulling too hard and that one not at all, gets his elbow around my chest and takes over the reins. The heat continues to increase, the fleecy clouds begin to float up like soap bubbles, higher and higher, run together and acquire dark-gray shadows. A hand holding a bottle and a small packet is thrust out of the carriage window; Vasily, with amazing agility, jumps down from the box of the moving britzka and brings us some cheese buns and kvas.

At a steep descent we all get out of the vehicles and race down to the bottom, while Vasily and Yakov, putting a drag on the wheels, support the carriage on both sides, as though they might hold it up, should it fall. Then, with Mimi's permission, Volodya or I get into the carriage, while Lyubochka or Katenka come to sit in the britzka. These changes make the girls very happy, because they rightly consider that riding in the britzka is much jollier. Sometimes, passing through a grove during the heat of the day, we fall behind the carriage, break off green branches and make an arbor over the britzka. The moving arbor races to catch up with the carriage and at this Lyubochka shrieks piercingly, something she never fails to do on any occasion that gives her great pleasure.

But here at last is the village in which we are to dine and rest. We can now catch the smells of the village: smoke, tar, bread-rings, the sound of voices, footsteps and wheels; the harness bells no longer sound as they did in the open fields, and to both sides there flash by thatched huts with small, carved wooden porches and tiny windows with red or green shutters in which here and there the face of a curious peasant woman appears. Here are little peasant boys and girls dressed only in long shirts: with wide-open eyes and outstretched arms they stand stock-still or, scampering barefoot through the dust and unmindful of Philip's threatening gestures, they run after the vehicles and try to clamber up onto the boxes that are strapped on behind.

And here are red-headed inn porters running up to the vehicles from both sides and with welcoming words and gestures vying with each other in enticing the travellers. Whoa! The gate creaks, the cross-bars scrape against the gatepost and we roll into the yard. Four hours of rest and freedom!

Chapter 2

THE STORM

The sun was sinking in the west and its hot, slanting rays burned my neck and cheeks intolerably; it was impossible to touch the scorching sides of the britzka; clouds of dust rose from the road and filled the air. There was not the slightest breeze to carry it away. At a regular distance in front of us and swaying measuredly was the tall, dusty body of the carriage with our luggage on its roof. Behind it I could occasionally glimpse the whip the driver was flourishing, his hat and Yakov's cap. I did not know what to do with myself: neither Volodya's dust-blackened face as he dozed beside me nor the movements of Philip's back, nor the long shadow of our britzka which sped along behind us at an oblique angle offered me any diversion. My attention was fixed on the mile

posts which I spotted from afar and on the clouds which had been scattered across the heavens and now, having acquired menacing black shadows, were gathering into one great, dark stormcloud. Every now and then there was a rumble of distant thunder. This last circumstance more than anything else increased my impatience to reach the post stage as quickly as possible. Thunderstorms aroused in me an indescribable feeling of depression and dread.

The nearest village was still some seven miles away, while a large, dark-purple stormcloud appearing from heaven knows where was advancing towards us swiftly, though there was not a breath of wind. The sun, not yet obscured by clouds, brightly illumined its sombre mass and the gray streaks that ran from it to the very horizon. Every now and then there was a flash of lightning in the distance and a faint rumble growing constantly louder, drawing ever closer and becoming peals of thunder which embraced the entire sky.

Vasily rose up on the box and raised the hood of the britzka; the drivers put on their coats and, at every clap of thunder, pulled off their caps and crossed themselves; the horses pricked up their ears and dilated their nostrils, as if sniffing the fresh air carried by the approaching cloud, and the britzka rolled faster along the dusty road. I became rigid with fear and felt the blood coursing faster through my veins. But now the nearer clouds were beginning to veil the sun; now it had peeped out for the last time, lit up the forebodingly gloomy edge of the horizon and disappeared. The countryside suddenly changed, taking on a leaden appearance. Now the aspen grove began to quiver; the leaves, turning a kind of cloudy-white and sharply outlined against the purple background of the cloud, rustled and twirled about; the tops of the tall birches began to sway, and tufts of dry grass flew across the road. Swifts and white-breasted swallows, as if intent on stopping us, circled over the britzka and swooped under the very chests of the horses; daws with ruffled wings flew sideways to the wind; the flaps of the leather apron which we had buttoned down around us began to lift, admitting gusts of damp wind and, blowing about, beat

against the sides of the britzka. Lightning flashed as though in the very britzka, blinding me and for an instant lighting up the gray cloth, the braid and the figure of Volodya huddled in a corner. Directly overhead at that very moment there was a majestic peal which, as though rising ever higher and higher, spreading wider and wider in a great spiral gradually grew in volume and at last became a deafening crack, making me instinctively tremble and hold my breath. The wrath of God! What poetry there is in this popular conception!

The wheels turned faster and faster; I could tell by the backs of Vasily and Philip, who slaped the reins impatiently, that they, too, were frightened. The britzka rolled swiftly downhill and clattered onto a wooden bridge. I was afraid to move and at any moment expected us all to perish.

Whoa! A cross-bar had come off and in spite of the incessant deafening claps of thunder we were forced to stop on the bridge.

Leaning my head against the edge of the britzka, with sinking heart and bated breath I hopelessly watched the movements of Philip's thick, dirty fingers as he slowly tied a knot and straightened the traces, pushing the side-horse with his palm and the whip handle.

Anxious feelings of helpless despair and terror rose up in me as the storm gathered, but at the arrival of that solemn momentary lull which usually precedes the breaking of a thunderstorm these feelings reached such a pitch that were this condition to last for another quarter of an hour I am convinced I should have died from the strain. At that very moment there suddenly appeared from under the bridge, dressed in nothing save a filthy, ragged long shirt, some sort of a human creature with a bloated, vacant face, a cropped, uncovered, shaking head, skinny, bandy legs and a shiny red stump in place of a hand which he thrust right into the britzka.

"Ma-a-s'er! Alms, for the love of Go-o-d," the feeble voice cried, and at each word the beggar crossed himself and bowed low.

I cannot describe the feeling of sheer terror which gripped my heart at that moment. My hair stood on end

and my eyes, in the stupefaction of horror, were fixed on the beggar...

Vasily, whose duty it was to distribute alms on the journey, offered meddlesome advice to Philip on fixing the cross-bar and only when all was at last ready and Philip, gathering up the reins, climbed onto the box, started to pull something from his side pocket. But no sooner did we begin to move than a blinding flash of lightning, instantly filling the whole dell with fiery light, brought the horses up short and was immediately followed by such a deafening clap of thunder that it seemed the heavens were coming down upon us. The wind became still stronger: the horses' manes and tails, Vasily's overcoat and the flaps of the apron all took on the same direction and fluttered frantically in the gusts of violent wind. A large drop of rain fell heavily on the leather hood of the britzka ... another, a third, a fourth and suddenly it seemed as though someone were drumming overhead and the countryside resounded with the steady patter of falling rain. By the motion of Vasily's elbows I saw that he was untying his purse: the beggar, still crossing himself and bowing, ran along beside the very wheels, so close that he was in danger of being run over. "Alms, for the lo-o-ve of God." At last a copper coin flew past us and the pitiful creature in rags plastered to his bony limbs and drenched through and through stopped in bewilderment in the middle of the road, swaying in the wind, and then disappeared from sight.

The slanting rain, driven by a strong wind, came down in buckets; it streamed down the back of Vasily's frieze coat into a pool of cloudy water that had gathered on the apron. The dust, at first beaten into pellets, turned into mud which was kneaded by the wheels; the jolting became less violent and turbid streams began to course along the clayey ruts. The lightning flashed wider and paler and the peals of thunder were not now as startling, muffled as they were by the steady sound of the rain.

But now the rain became finer; the thundercloud began to break up into fleecy clouds, grew lighter in the spot where the sun should have been and at the light-gray edge of the thundercloud a patch of clear blue became visible.

A moment later a timid ray of sunshine was glistening in the puddles of the road, in the sheets of fine, straight rain which fell as through a sieve and on the rain-washed, glistening green of the roadside grass. The black thundercloud still covered the far horizon just as threateningly, but I no longer feared it. A joyous surge of faith in life rapidly replaced my oppressive feeling of dread. My soul smiled in accord with Nature, refreshed and cheered. Vasily turned down the collar of his coat, took off his cap and shook it; Volodya threw back the apron; I leaned out of the britzka and eagerly drank in the fresh and fragrant air. The shiny, rain-washed body of the carriage with the luggage on top swayed in front of us; the horses' backs, the breech-bands, reins and wheels, all were wet and sparkled in the sun as if varnished. On one side of the road a vast field of winter wheat cut through here and there by shallow ravines, its wet earth and vegetation gleaming, stretched off like a shadowy carpet to the very horizon; on the other side an aspen grove, interspersed with hazelnut and bird-cherry undergrowth, was blissfully motionless and slowly shed bright drops of rain from its clean-washed branches onto last year's dry leaves. All about us crested skylarks soared with glad songs and swooped swiftly down; in the wet bushes one heard the busy movement of small birds, while from the heart of the grove a cuckoo's call reached us clearly. This wonderful scent of the woods after a spring thunderstorm, the aroma of birch, violets, rotting leaves, morels and bird-cherry was so enchanting that I could not stay in the britzka but jumped from the step, ran to the bushes and, though raindrops showered down on me, I broke off wet branches of blossoming bird-cherry, stroked my face with them and drank in their lovely scent. Heedless even of the huge lumps of mud which stuck to my boots and of my wet stockings, I ran splashing through the mud to the carriage window.

"Lyubochka! Katenka!" I shouted, handing in some branches of bird-cherry. "See how lovely they are!"

The girls squealed and exclaimed; Mimi shouted to me to go away or I should certainly be run over.

"Just smell it, see how it smells!" I shouted.

Chapter 3

A NEW POINT OF VIEW

Katenka sat beside me in the britzka and, tilting her pretty head, gazed pensively at the dusty road disappearing beneath the wheels. I watched her in silence and wondered at the sad, un-childlike expression which I had never before noticed on her rosy face.

"We shall soon be in Moscow," I said. "What do you think it is like?"

"I don't know," she replied reluctantly.

"Still, do you think it is bigger than Serpukhov or not?"

"What?"

"Nothing."

But an instinctive feeling which enables one person to guess another's thoughts and which serves as the guiding thread of a conversation made Katenka realize that I was hurt by her indifference. She raised her head and turned to me:

"Did your papa tell you that we would live at your grandmother's?"

"He did. Grandmother wants to live with us for always."

"And shall we all live there?"

"Naturally. We shall live upstairs on one side, you'll be on the other side, and Papa will be in the wing, but we shall all dine together downstairs with Grandmother."

"Mamma says that your grandmother is very grand. Is she also cross?"

"No-o-o! She only seems so at first. She is grand, but not at all cross; on the contrary, she is very kind-hearted and jolly. You should have seen what a ball there was on her birthday!"

"All the same, I'm afraid of her. And besides, heaven only knows whether we shall..."

Katenka suddenly fell silent and became thoughtful again.

"Wha-at?" I asked anxiously.

"Never mind."

"Wait, but you said something: 'Heaven only knows...'"

"You were telling me what a ball there was at your grandmother's."

"What a pity that all of you were not there. There were crowds of visitors, about a thousand people, music and generals, and I danced... Katenka!" I suddenly said, stopping short in the midst of my description. "Aren't you listening?"

"Yes, I am; you were saying that you danced."

"Why are you so sad?"

"One can't always be jolly."

"But you've changed a great deal since we returned from Moscow. Tell me truthfully," I added with a resolute look, turning to face her, "why have you become so strange?" "As though I were strange?" Katenka replied with animation, which proved that my remark interested her. "I'm not a bit strange."

"Oh, but you are not at all like you used to be," I continued. "Before one could see that you were always with us in everything, that you considered us family and loved us just as we love you, but now you have become so serious, drawing away from us..."

"Not at all..."

"Wait, let me finish," I interrupted, already beginning to feel the slight tickling in my nose that preceded the tears that always welled up in my eyes when I expressed a long-repressed, private thought. "You are drawing away from us, you talk only to Mimi, as though you did not wish to know us."

"But one cannot always remain the same; one must some day change, too," replied Katenka, who had a habit of explaining everything as a kind of fatalistic necessity when she did not know what to say.

I recall that once, having quarrelled with Lyubochka, who had called her a *silly child*, she had replied: everyone can't be clever, there must be silly people, too; but I was not satisfied by the reply that one had to change some day, too, and I continued to question her:

"But why must one?"

"After all, we shan't always be living together,"

Katenka replied, blushing slightly and staring intently at Philip's back. "Mamma could live in the home of your departed mother, who was her friend; but in the home of the countess who, they say, is such a cross person, well, heaven only knows. Will they get along together? Besides, some day we shall have to part: you are rich, you have Petrovskoye, but we are poor, my mother has nothing."

You are rich, we are poor: these words and the concepts they stood for seemed to me quite strange. Only beggars and peasants could be poor, according to my understanding at the time, and this notion of poverty I could in no way associate in my mind with graceful, pretty Katenka. It seemed to me that since Mimi and Katenka had always lived with us they would always go on living with us and sharing equally in all we had. It could not be otherwise. Now, however, thousands of new, vague thoughts regarding their solitary condition swarmed in my head and I became so ashamed that we were rich and they were poor that I blushed and could not find the courage to look at Katenka.

"What of it if we are rich and they are poor?" I was thinking. "And why should it mean it is necessary to part? Why should we not divide what we have equally?" But I understood that it would not do to speak to Katenka of this and some practical instinct, in opposition to these logical thoughts, was already telling me that she was right and that it would be out of place to explain my idea to her.

"Do you really mean to leave us?" I said. "How are we ever going to live apart?"

"What's to be done? It hurts me, too; but if it does happen, I know what I shall do..."

"You'll become an actress... how silly!" I interposed, knowing that she had always dreamed of being an actress.

"No, I used to say that when I was little..."

"Then what will you do?"

"I'll go into a convent and shall live there and shall wear a plain black dress and a velvet cap."

Katenka began to cry.

Have you ever, dear reader, at a certain point in your life suddenly noticed that your outlook on things has

changed completely, as though all the objects you had hitherto observed had suddenly presented to you another, unfamiliar side? This sort of moral about-face occurred in me for the first time during our journey, from which I date the beginning of my adolescence.

For the first time the thought clearly occurred to me that not we alone, that is, our family, lived in this world, that not all interests centered on us, but that there existed another life, of people who had nothing in common with us, cared nothing for us and even had no idea of our existence. Certainly, I had known all this before, too, but I had known it not as I discovered it now. I had not realized and had not felt it.

An idea becomes a conviction only by following a course of its own, often a quite unexpected one and different from those which other minds traverse to arrive at the same conviction. My conversation with Katenka, which affected me so deeply and caused me to reflect upon her future position, was the course in my case. As I looked at the villages and towns that we passed in which in every house there lived at least a family like ours, at the women and children who stared with momentary curiosity at the carriage and disappeared from sight forever, at the shopkeepers and peasant men who not only did not bow to us, as I was accustomed to seeing them do in Petrovskoye, but did not even deign to glance at us, for the first time I asked myself: what can interest them if they are not in the least concerned about us? And from this question there arose others: how and by what do they live? How do they bring up their children? Do they teach them? Do they let them out to play? How do they punish them? And so on.

Chapter 4

IN MOSCOW

After our arrival in Moscow the change in my outlook on things and on people and in my own attitude towards them became still more marked.

At my first meeting with Grandmother, at the sight of her thin, wrinkled face and eyes with the light gone out of them, the feeling of servile respect and awe which I had had for her gave way to compassion; and when, pressing her cheek to Lyubochka's head she sobbed as though the body of her beloved daughter were there before her, a feeling of actual love replaced my compassion. I felt uncomfortable at seeing her sorrow on greeting us; I realized that of ourselves we meant nothing to her, that we were dear to her only as a remembrance, and I felt that in each kiss she showered on my cheeks there was expressed but one thought: she is no more, she is dead, I shall never see her again!

Papa, who scarcely paid any attention to us in Moscow and who with a perpetually concerned look on his face only joined us at dinner, wearing a black frock-coat or dress-coat, had, together with his large, turned-down shirt collars, dressing-gown, village elders, stewards, visits to the threshing-floor and hunts, lost much in my estimation. Karl Ivanych, whom Grandmother called the *under-tutor* and who suddenly, heaven only knows why, had taken it into his head to exchange his venerable, familiar bald pate for a red wig with a threaded parting almost in the middle, appeared so strange and ridiculous to me that I was surprised I had not noticed it before.

A sort of invisible barrier also arose between the girls and us; both they and we now had our own secrets. It was as though they were proud to show off their skirts, which were becoming longer, and we our pantaloons with straps. As for Mimi, the first Sunday she came down to dinner in such a fine gown and with such ribbons on her cap that one could see at once that we were no longer in the country and that now everything would be different.

Chapter 5

THE ELDER BROTHER

I was only a year and some months younger than Volodya; we grew up, studied and played, always together. No

distinction was made between us of elder and younger; but it was just about the time of which I am speaking that I began to understand that Volodya was not my comrade in age, interests or in abilities. It even seemed to me that Volodya himself was aware of his superiority and was proud of it. This conviction, perhaps unfounded, was inspired in me by my pride, which suffered at every contact with him. He was better than I in everything: in games, in studies, in debates and in manners, and all this estranged us and caused me to experience mental anguish which I could not understand. If, when Volodya had his first pleated cambric shirts made, I had come straight out and said that I was very vexed at not having any like them I am convinced that I should have felt happier and should not have imagined, every time he adjusted his collar, that he was doing it only to spite me.

I was most tormented by the idea that Volodya understood me, but tried to conceal it.

Who has not noticed those mysterious, unspoken relations which manifest themselves in the trace of a smile, a gesture or a look exchanged between people who live constantly together: brothers, friends, husband and wife or master and servant, especially if these persons are not completely frank with each other? How many unspoken desires and thoughts, and the fear of being understood are expressed in a single casual glance, when your eyes meet timidly and hesitantly!

But perhaps I was misled in this respect by my excessive sensibility and inclination to analysis; perhaps Volodya did not feel at all as I did. He was impetuous, frank and fickle in his passions. Susceptible to the most diverse enthusiasms, he would devote himself to them wholeheartedly.

Now he would suddenly be seized with a passion for pictures: he would spend all his pocket money on them and would wheedle them from the drawing teacher, from Papa and from Grandmother, he would begin drawing himself; now it would be a passion for curios with which he adorned his little table, collecting them from all over the house; now it would be a passion for novels which he obtained on the sly and read day and night... I was un-

wittingly carried away by his passions but was too proud to follow in his footsteps and too young and inexperienced to find a road of my own. Yet, I envied nothing so much as Volodya's happy, good-natured disposition which showed itself most strikingly in the quarrels we occasionally had. I felt that he behaved well but could not do likewise.

Once, at the height of his passion for bric-a-brac, I went up to his table and accidentally broke a little colored glass bottle.

"Who said you could touch my things?" Volodya demanded on entering the room, seeing the discord I had brought about in the symmetry of the various bric-a-brac on his table. "Where's the little bottle? You've always got to ..."

"I dropped it by accident and it broke, but what does it matter?"

"Do me a favor and don't ever *dare* touch my things," he said, piecing together the bits of the broken bottle and gazing at them unhappily.

"Please *don't order me around*," I retorted. "If I broke it, I broke it. What's the use of talking about it?"

And I smiled, though I did not in the least wish to smile.

"Oh, it's nothing to you, but it's *something* to me," Volodya continued, jerking his shoulder, a gesture he had inherited from Papa. "First he breaks it and then he laughs, that insufferable *child*!"

"I may be a child, but you are big and stupid."

"I do not intend to argue with you," Volodya said, pushing me lightly aside. "Move away."

"Don't shove!"

"Move away!"

"I said, don't shove!"

Volodya took me by the hand and was about to drag me away from the table but I was by then thoroughly enraged: I seized a leg and tipped the table over. "So there!" And all the china and crystal bric-a-brac fell crashing to the floor.

"You detestable child!" Volodya shouted, trying to rescue what he could of the falling objects.

"Well, now everything's over between us," I said to myself, leaving the room. "We've quarrelled for ever."

We did not speak to each other till evening; I felt guilty, was afraid to look at him and all day long could find nothing to occupy myself. Volodya, on the contrary, did his lessons well and, as always, talked and laughed with the girls after dinner.

As soon as a tutor would end a lesson I would leave the room: I was afraid, uneasy and ashamed to remain alone with my brother. After the evening history lesson I picked up my exercise books and started towards the door. Passing Volodya, though I wanted to go up to him and apologize, I tried to scowl. At that very moment Volodya raised his head and looked at me boldly with a barely perceptible, good-natured, teasing smile. Our eyes met, and I saw that he understood me and also that he knew I saw that he understood me; but some overpowering feeling made me turn away.

"Nikolenka!" he said to me in a most natural and not in the least solemn voice. "Don't be cross. Forgive me if I offended you."

And he held out his hand.

It was as though, rising higher and higher, something had suddenly begun to constrict my chest and choke me; but this only lasted for a second: tears sprang to my eyes and I felt better.

"For...give me, Vol...dya!" I said, pressing his hand.

But Volodya looked at me quite as though he could not understand why there should be tears in my eyes...

Chapter 6

MASHA

However, none of the changes that had taken place in my outlook on things was as startling to me as that which made me cease to regard one of our housemaids as a servant of the female sex and begin to see in her a *woman*

upon whom might depend, to some extent, my peace of mind and happiness.

For as far back as I can remember myself I remember Masha living in our house and never, till the incident which changed my view of her completely and which I shall now relate, had I taken the slightest note of her. Masha was about twenty-five when I was fourteen; she was very pretty, but I am afraid to describe her, afraid lest my imagination should again conjure up the enchanting and delusive image formed in it at the time of my infatuation. So as not to err I shall merely say that she was uncommonly fair, voluptuously developed and was a woman, while I was fourteen years old.

In one of those moments when, lesson-book in hand, you are walking up and down the room, trying to step only on the cracks between the floorboards, or humming some senseless tune, or are daubing ink on the edge of the table, or mindlessly repeating some quotation, in a word, in one of those moments when your mind refuses to function and your imagination, taking the upper hand, seeks new impressions, I left the schoolroom and went idly down to the landing.

Someone wearing heavy shoes was coming up the lower flight of the staircase. Naturally, I wanted to know who it was, but suddenly the sound of footsteps ceased and I heard Masha's voice: "There now, don't be naughty. What if Maria Ivanovna comes along, will that be nice?"

"She won't," Volodya's voice whispered and then something moved, as if Volodya wanted to detain her.

"Where d'you think you're putting your hands? For shame!" and Masha, her kerchief pulled awry and her plump white neck exposed, hurried past me.

I cannot describe how astonished I was at this discovery. However, my feeling of astonishment soon gave way to one of sympathy with Volodya's action: I was no longer surprised at his behavior as such, but at how he had discovered that it was pleasant to behave thus. And I unwittingly wished to imitate him.

I sometimes spent hours on the landing, my mind a blank, straining to catch the slightest movement coming

from upstairs, but could never bring myself to follow Volodya's example, though I longed to do that more than anything else in the world. Sometimes, hiding behind the door, I listened with a painful feeling of envy and jealousy to a tussle going on in the maids' room and the thought would occur to me: what would my position be if I were to go upstairs and, like Volodya, try to kiss Masha? What should I say, I of the broad nose and unruly hair, if she asked me what I wanted? Sometimes I would hear Masha saying to Volodya: "What a nuisance you are! Now, why are you pestering me? Go away, you naughty boy... Why is it Nikolai Petrovich never comes here and never fools around?" She did not know that Nikolai Petrovich was at that very moment sitting at the foot of the stairs and would have given anything in the world to be in naughty Volodya's shoes.

I was bashful by nature, but my bashfulness was further increased by a conviction of my ugliness. I am positive that nothing has such a tremendous influence on a person's development as his appearance, and not so much his appearance itself as a conviction of its attractiveness or unattractiveness.

I was too conceited to become resigned to my position and consoled myself as the fox did, persuading myself that the grapes were still sour; that is, I tried to despise all the pleasures afforded one by good looks, which I saw Volodya enjoying and which I envied with all my heart, and so exerted all the powers of my mind and imagination to find pleasure in haughty solitude.

Chapter 7

BIRDSHOT

"My goodness, gunpowder!" Mimi exclaimed in a voice breathless with horror. "What are you doing? You want to set the house on fire and kill us all..."

And with an indescribable expression of fortitude Mimi ordered everyone to step back. With long, determined strides she approached the scattered birdshot and, dis-

daining the danger which might result from a sudden explosion, began stamping it out. When, in her opinion, all danger was past, she summoned Mikhei and ordered him to throw out this *gunpowder*, as far away as possible or, better still, into some water, and proudly tossing her cap, she hurried to the drawing room. "They are very well looked after, I must say," she muttered.

When Papa came in from the wing and we went off with him to see Grandmother, Mimi was already there, sitting by the window and looking sternly past the door with a kind of enigmatic, official expression. In her hand she had something wrapped up in several layers of paper. I guessed that this was some birdshot and that Grandmother already knew of what had happened.

Apart from Mimi there were in Grandmother's room the maid Gasha who, as was evident from her angry, flushed face, was very upset, and Dr. Blumenthal, a short, pocked-marked little man who was vainly trying to appease Gasha by making mysterious, pacifying signs to her with his head and eyes.

Grandmother herself was sitting somewhat sideways, laying out *The Journeyman*, a game of patience which always indicated a very inauspicious frame of mind.

"How do you feel today, Mamma? Did you sleep well?" Papa said, kissing her hand respectfully.

"Fine, my dear; I believe you know that I am always perfectly well," Grandmother replied in a tone of voice that implied that Papa's question was a most inappropriate and insulting one. "Well, are you going to give me a clean handkerchief?" she continued, addressing Gasha.

"I've given you one," Gasha replied, pointing to the snow-white lawn handkerchief that lay on the arm of the chair.

"Take this dirty rag away and give me a clean one, my dear."

Gasha went up to the chiffonniere, pulled out a drawer and then slammed it shut so violently that the windows rattled in the room. Grandmother glanced sternly at all of us and continued to follow the maid's every movement closely. When she had handed her what appeared to me to be the very same handkerchief, Grandmother said:

"When will you grate my snuff, my dear?"

"I'll grate it when I have time to."

"What was that?"

"I'll grate some today."

"If you do not wish to serve me, my dear, you should have said so: I would have let you go long ago."

"When you do, it won't break my heart," the maid muttered under her breath.

At that moment the doctor began to wink at her, but she looked at him so angrily and determinedly that he immediately lowered his eyes and busied himself with his watch key.

"You see, my dear," Grandmother said, turning to Papa after Gasha, still muttering, had left the room, "how I am spoken to in my own house?"

"Allow me, Mamma. I shall grate your snuff myself," said Papa, evidently quite put out by this unexpected remark.

"Oh, no, thank you: the reason she is so impudent is that she knows no one else can grate snuff the way I like it. Do you know, my dear," Grandmother went on after a moment's silence, "that your children nearly burned the house down today?"

Papa regarded Grandmother with respectful curiosity.

"Yes, this is what they have been playing with. Show it to him," she said, turning to Mimi.

Papa took the birdshot and could not suppress a smile.

"Why, this is birdshot, Mamma," he said. "It's not dangerous at all."

"I am most grateful to you, my dear, for instructing me, but I am too old now ..."

"It's her nerves," the doctor whispered.

And Papa immediately turned to us.

"How did you get this? And how dare you play with such things?"

"It is no use asking them. You must ask their *under-tutor*," Grandmother said, enunciating "under-tutor" with particular scorn. "Why does he not look after them?"

"Woldemar said that Karl Ivanych himself gave him this *gunpowder*," Mimi interposed quickly.

"There, you see what good he is," Grandmother con-

tinued. "And where is he, that *under-tutor* what's-his-name? Send him in here."

"I let him go visiting," Papa said.

"That is unreasonable; he should always be here. The children are not mine, they are yours, and I have no right to advise you, because you are more clever than I," Grandmother went on, "but it would seem to be high time a tutor was engaged for them instead of an *under-tutor*, a German moujik. Yes, a stupid peasant who cannot teach them anything except bad manners and Tyrolean songs. Is it so very important, I ask you, that the children be able to sing Tyrolean songs? However, there is no one to care about this *now*, and you can do as you like."

The word "now" meant: now that they have no mother, and called forth sad memories in Grandmother's heart; she dropped her eyes to the snuffbox with the portrait on it and became pensive.

"I have been thinking about it for some time," Papa hastened to say, "and wished to consult you, Mamma: should we not engage St.-Jérôme, who now gives them lessons by the hour?"

"You will do well to do so, my dear," Grandmother said, but no longer in the dissatisfied tone of voice in which she had been speaking until then. "St.-Jérôme is at least a *gouverneur* [1] who knows how to educate *des enfants de bonne maison*,[2] and not a simple *menin*, a servant who is only fit to take them out walking."

"I shall speak to him tomorrow then," Papa said.

And indeed, two days after this conversation Karl Ivanych yielded his post to a young dandy of a Frenchman.

Chapter 8

KARL IVANYCH'S STORY

Late on the eve of the day on which Karl Ivanych was to leave us forever he stood in his quilted dressing-gown

[1] A tutor.

[2] Children of good family.

and red cap beside his bed and, bending over a portmanteau, was carefully packing his things in it.

Karl Ivanych's attitude towards us these days had been somehow especially distant: he seemed to be avoiding all intercourse with us. Now, too, when I entered the room he glanced at me from under his brows and returned to his task. I lay down on my bed but Karl Ivanych, who had formerly strictly forbidden us to do so, said nothing to me and the thought that he would never either scold or restrain us, that he was not now in the least concerned about us, vividly reminded me of our impending separation. I felt sad at his having stopped loving us and wished to express this feeling to him.

"Let me help you, Karl Ivanych," I said, going up to him.

Karl Ivanych glanced at me and turned away again, but in that fleeting glance I read not indifference, to which I had attributed his coldness, but sincere, deep sorrow.

"God sees everything and knows everything, and everything depends upon His holy will," he said, straightening up to his full height and sighing deeply. "Yes, Nikolenka," he went on, noticing the expression of sincere sympathy with which I gazed at him, "it is my lot to be unlucky from my cradle on and to my grave. I have always been repaid by evil for the good which I have done for people and my reward is not here, but from there," he said, pointing to the sky. "If you only knew my story and all I have endured in this life! I was a shoemaker, I was a soldier, I was a *deserter*, I worked in a manufactory, I was a teacher and now I am naught! And I, like the Son of God, have no place to lay my head," he concluded and, closing his eyes, sank into the armchair.

Seeing that Karl Ivanych was in that sentimental, emotional state in which he, paying no heed to his audience, expressed his innermost thoughts aloud, I sat down silently on the bed, my eyes never leaving his kind face.

"You are not a child, you can understand. I will tell you my story and all I have endured in this life. Some day you will remember the old friend who loved you so dearly, children!"

Karl Ivanych leaned his elbow on the small table that

stood beside him, took a pinch of snuff and, raising his eyes to heaven, began his tale thus, in that peculiar, monotonous, gutteral voice in which he usually dictated to us:

"I vass unhappy vile shtil in my mutter's voom. *Das Unglück verfolgte mich schon im Schosse meiner Mutter!*" he repeated again with even more feeling.

As Karl Ivanych was to tell me his story more than once in the same sequence, employing the same expressions and the same unvarying intonations, I hope to recount it almost word for word: naturally, excluding the errors of speech, of which the reader may judge by the first sentence. Whether this was actually his story, or a figment of his imagination, evolved during his lonely life in our house and which he himself had begun to believe as a result of frequent repetition, or whether he merely embroidered the actual events of his life with fantastic additions I have not yet been able to decide. On the one hand, he told his story with too much vivid emotion and methodical consistency, which comprise the chief signs of veracity, for it not to be credible; on the other hand, there were too many poetic embellishments in his story, and it was these embellishments that raised one's doubts.

"In my veins flows the noble blood of the Counts von Sommerblat! *In meiner Adern fliesst das edle Blut des Grafen von Sommerblat!* I was born six weeks after the wedding. My mother's husband (I called him Papa) was Count Sommerblat's tenant. He could not forget my mother's disgrace and did not love me. I had a little brother Johann and two sisters; but I was a stranger in my own family! *Ich war ein Fremder in meiner eigenen Familie!* Whenever Johann got into mischief Papa would say: 'This child Karl will never give me a moment's peace!' And I was scolded and punished. Whenever my sisters quarreled, Papa would say: 'Karl will never be an obedient boy' and I was scolded and punished. Only my kind mamma loved and petted me. Often she would say to me: 'Karl! Come here to my room', and she would kiss me when no one was looking. 'Poor, poor Karl,' she said, 'no one loves you, but I would not exchange you for anyone else. One thing your mamma asks of you,' she said to me, 'that

you study well and always be an honest person, and God will not forsake you! *Trachte nur ein ehrlicher Deutscher zu werden,' sagte sie, 'und der liebe Gott wird dich nicht verlassen!'* And I tried. When I was fourteen and could go to communion, my mother said to my father: 'Karl is now a big boy, Gustav, what shall we do with him?' And my father said: 'I don't know.' Then my mother said: 'We'll send him to town, to Herr Schultz, let him be a shoemaker!' And my father said: 'Good.' *Und mein Vater sagte 'gut'.* For six years and seven months I lived in town in the shoemaker's house, and my master was fond of me. He said: 'Karl is a good worker and soon he will be my *Geselle*,[1] but ... man proposeth, God disposeth ... In 1796 there was a mobilization and everyone who was able to serve, from eighteen to the twenty-first year, had to come to town.

"My father and my brother Johann came to town and together we went to draw *Loos*[2] to see who was to be a *Soldat* and who was not to be a *Soldat*. Johann drew a bad number, he was to be a *Soldat*; I drew a good number, I was not to be a *Soldat*. And my father said: 'I had one son and I must part with him! *Ich hatte einen einzigen Sohn und von diesem muss ich mich trennen!*'

"I took him by the hand and said: 'Why did you say that, Papa? Come with me and I will tell you something.' And my father went. My father went and we sat down at a little table in a tavern. 'Bring us a couple of *Bierkrug*,'[3] I said and they brought them. We each had a mug and my brother Johann also drank.

"'Father!' I said, 'Don't say that you had one son and now you must part with him. My heart wants to *jump out* when I hear *this*. Brother Johann will not serve, I will be the *Soldat*! No one here needs Karl, and Karl will be a *Soldat*.'

"'You are an honest man, Karl Ivanych!' my father said to me and kissed me. '*Du bist ein braver Bursche!' sagte mir mein Vater und küsste mich.*

"And I was a *Soldat*!"

1 Assistant.
2 Lots.
3 Mugs of beer.

Chapter 9

A CONTINUATION OF THE FOREGOING

"Then was a terrible time, Nikolenka," Karl Ivanych continued. "Then was Napoleon. He wanted to conquer Germany, and we defended our Fatherland to the last drop of blood! *Und wir verteidigten unser Vaterland bis auf den letzten Tropfen Blut!*

"I was at Ulm, I was at Austerlitz! I was at Wagram! *Ich war bei Wagram*!"

"And did you really fight?" I asked, looking at him in wonder. "And did you really kill people?"

Karl Ivanych immediately calmed my fears on this point.

"Once a French *Grenadier* dropped behind his unit and fell down on the road. I came running with my musket and wanted to run him through, *aber der Franzose warf sein Gewehr und rief pardon*,[1] and I let him go!

"At Wagram Napoleon drove us onto an island and surrounded us, so that no place was there to escape. For three days and three nights we had no provision and we stood in water up to our knees. The villain Napoleon did not capture us and did not let us go! *Und der Bösewicht Napoleon wollte uns nicht gefangen nehmen und auch nicht freilassen*!

"On the fourth day, thank God, we were taken prisoner and led off to a fortress. I wore blue pantaloon, a uniform of good cloth and had fifteen thalers and a silver watch, a gift from my papa. A French *Soldat* took it all from me. Luckily, I had three gold pieces which my mamma had sewn into my under-waistcoat. No one found them!

"I did not want to remain in the fortress for long and decided to escape. One day, on a big holiday, I said to the sergeant who guarded us: 'Herr Sergeant, today is a big holiday, and I want to celebrate it. Please bring two bottle of madeira and we will drink it together.' And the sergeant said: 'Good.' When the sergeant brought the madeira and we each have a glass, I took him by the hand

[1] But the Frenchman threw down his arms and begged for mercy.

and said: 'Herr Sergeant, perhaps you have a father and mother?' He said: 'I do, Herr Mauer ...'. 'My father and mother,' I said, 'have not seen me for eight years and do not know whether I am alive or if my bones have long been moldering in the ground. O, Herr Sergeant! I have two gold pieces that were in my under-waistcoat. Take them and let me go. Be my benefactor and my mamma will pray to Almighty God for you all the days of her life.'

"The sergeant drank a glass of madeira and said: 'Herr Mauer, I like you very much and I am sorry for you, but you are a prisoner and I am a *Soldat*!' I shook his hand and said: 'Herr Sergeant!' *Ich drückte ihm die Hand und sagte*: '*Herr Sergeant*!'

"And the sergeant said: 'You are a poor man and I won't take your money, but I will help you. When I go to sleep, buy the soldiers a bucket of vodka and they will sleep. I won't watch you.'

"He was a good man. I bought a bucket of vodka and when the soldiers were drunk I put on my boots and my old greatcoat and crept out the door. I went to the rampart and wanted to jump, but there was water there and I did not want to spoil my last remaining clothes: so I went to the gate.

"A sentry walked *auf und ab*[1] and looked at me: '*Qui vive?' sagte er auf einmal*,[2] and I was silent. '*Qui vive?' sagte er zum zweiten Mal*,[3] and I was silent. '*Qui vive?' sagte er zum dritten Mal*,[4] and I run. I jump into the waters, climb out on another side and streak off. *Ich sprang ins Wasser, kletterte auf die andere Seite und machte mich aus dem Staube.*

"All night I ran along the road, but when it dawned I was afraid I would be recognized and hid in the tall rye. There I got on my knees, folded my hands, thanked our Heavenly Father for his mercy, and fell asleep at peace. *Ich dankte dem allmächtigen Gott für Seine Barmherzigkeit und mit beruhigtem Gefühl schlief ich ein.*

[1] Up and down.
[2] "Who goes there?" said he suddenly.
[3] He said a second time.
[4] He said a third time.

"I woke up in the evening and went on. Suddenly, a large German wagon pulled by two black horses caught up with me. In the wagon sat a well-dressed man, smoking a pipe and looking at me. I walked slowly, to let the wagon pass me, but I walked slowly and the wagon rolled slowly, and the man was looking at me; I walked faster and the wagon moved faster, and the man was looking at me. I sat down by the road; the man stopped his horses and was looking at me. 'Young man,' he said, 'where are you going so late?' I said: 'I am going to Frankfurt.' 'Get into my wagon, there is room, and I will take you there... Why do you not have anything with you? Your face is not shaven and your clothes are muddy,' he said to me when I sat down beside him. 'I'm a poor man,' I said. 'I want to find work in some manufactory, and my clothes are muddy because I fell down on the road.' 'You do not speak the truth, young man,' he said, 'the road is dry now.'

"And I said nothing.

"'Tell me the whole truth,' the kind man said to me. 'Who are you and where do you come from? I like your face, and if you are an honest man, I will help you.'

"And I told him everything. He said: 'All right, young man, come along to my rope-yard. I will give you work, clothes and money, and you shall live in my house.'

"And I said: 'Good.'

"We came to the rope-yard and the kind man said to his wife: 'Here is a young man who fought for his Fatherland and escaped from captivity; he has no home, no clothes, no food. He shall live in my house. Give him clean linen and feed him.'

"I lived a year and a half at the rope-yard and my master grew so fond of me that he did not want to let me go. And I was happy. I was a handsome man then, I was young, tall, blue-eyed, with an aquiline nose ... and Madame L... (I cannot reveal her name), my master's wife, was a young and pretty lady. And she fell in love with me.

"When she saw me she said: 'Herr Mauer, what does your mamma call you?' I said: 'Karlchen.'

"And she said: 'Karlchen! Sit beside me.'

"I sat beside her and she said: 'Karlchen! Kiss me.'

"I kissed *him* and he said: 'Karlchen! I love you so much that I cannot bear it,' and he trembled all over."

Here Karl Ivanych paused for some time and, rolling his kind blue eyes and shaking his head slightly, began to smile as people do at a pleasant memory.

"Yes," he began again, sitting up in the armchair and wrapping his dressing-gown around him, "I have experienced much good and much evil in my life; but here is my witness," he said, pointing to a small petit-point icon of the Saviour which hung over his bed, "no one can say that Karl Ivanych was a dishonorable man! I did not wish to pay in black ingratitude for the kindness which Herr L... had shown me and decided to run away. In the evening, when everyone is in bed, I wrote a letter to my master, put it on the table in my room, took my clothes, three thalers and crept out to the street. No one saw me, and I went off down the road."

Chapter 10

A CONTINUATION

"I had not seen my mamma in nine years and did not know whether she was alive or whether her bones were already moldering in the ground. I went to my Fatherland. When I came to my town I asked where Gustav Mauer lived, who was a tenant of Count Sommerblat. And I was told: Count Sommerblat is dead, and Gustav Mauer lives now on the main street and has a *liqueur* shop'. I put on my new waistcoat, a good coat, a gift of the manufacturer, brushed my hair well and went to my papa's *liqueur* shop. My sister Mariechen was sitting in the shop and asked what I wanted. I said: 'May I have one glass *liqueur*?' And she said: 'Vater! The young man wants a glass of *liqueur*.' And Papa said: 'Serve the young man a glass of *liqueur*.' I sat down at a little table, sipped my glass of *liqueur*, smoked my pipe and looked at Papa, Mariechen and Johann, who had also come into the shop.

As we were talking Papa said to me: 'You must know, young man, where our *Armee* is now stationed?' I said: 'I myself have come from the *Armee* now, and it is stationed near Wien.'[1] 'Our son,' Papa said, 'was a *Soldat*, and now for nine years he has not written to us and we do not know whether he is alive or dead. My wife always weeps for him...' I was smoking my pipe and said: "What was your son's name and where did he serve? Perhaps I know him..." 'His name was Karl Mauer and he served with the Austrian Jägers,' my papa said. 'He is a tall and handsome man, like you,' said my sister Mariechen. I said: 'I knew your Karl.' *'Amalia!' sagte auf einmal mein Vater,*[2] 'come here, here is a young man, he knows our Karl.' *And mine dear Mutter comes out back of door. I right now recognize him. 'You knowing our Karl,' he say, looking at me and all while trem...bel!* 'Yes, I saw him,' I said and did not dare raise my eyes to her; my heart wanted to jump. 'My Karl is alive!' Mamma said. 'Thank God! Where is he, my dear Karl? I should die in peace if I could once again see him, my beloved son; but it is not God's will,' and *he* began to weep ... *I cannot stand it* ... 'Mamma!' I said, 'I am your Karl!' *And he fall into my arms* ..."

Karl Ivanych closed his eyes and his lips quivered. "'*Mutter!' sagte ich. 'Ich bin ihr Sohn, ich bin ihr Karl!' und sie stürzte mir in die Arme,*" he repeated, recovering somewhat and wiping away the large tears that ran down his cheeks.

"But God did not wish me to end my days in my native land. Misfortune pursued me everywhere! *Das Unglück verfolgte mich überall!* I lived in my native land for only three months. One Sunday I was in the coffee house, bought a mug of beer, was smoking my pipe and conversing with my friends about *Politik*, about Emperor Franz, about *Napoleon*, about the war, and each spoke his opinion. Near us sat a strange gentleman in a gray *Überrock*[3] who drank coffee, smoked a pipe and said nothing to us. *Er rauchte sein Pfeifchen und schweig still.* When the

[1] Vienna.
[2] 'Amalia!' said my father suddenly.
[3] Coat.

Nachtwächter[1] called ten c'clock I took my hat, paid my money and went home. In the middle of the night someone banged on the door. I woke up and said: 'Who is there?' '*Nacht auf*!'[2] I said: 'Tell me who it is and I will open.' *Ich sagte:* '*Sagt, wer ihr seid, und ich werde aufmachen.*' '*Macht auf im Namen des Gesetzes*!'[3] he said behind the door. And I opened. Two *Soldaten* with muskets stood behind the door, and into the room came the strange man in the gray *Überrock* who had sat beside us in the coffee house. He was a spy! *Es war ein Spion*! 'Come with me!' said the spy. 'All right,' I said ... I put on my boots *und Pantalon*, and putting on my braces, and walk up and down in the room. My heart was boiling; I said: 'He is a scoundrel!' When I came to the wall where my sword hung I suddenly seized it and said: '*You're a spy, defend yourself! Du bist ein Spion, verteidige dich!*" *Ich gab ein Hieb*[4] to the right, *ein Hieb* to the left, *and one on the heads. The spy fell down*! I snatched up my portmanteau and money and jumped out the window. *Ich nahm meinen Mantelsack und Beutel und sprang zum Fenster hinaus. Ich kam nach Ems*;[5] there I came to know *General Sazin*. He took a liking to me, got me a passport from the ambassador and took me along with him to Russia, to teach his children. When *General Sazin* died your mamma engaged me. She said: 'Karl Ivanych! I give you my children, love them, and I will never forsake you, I will provide for you in your old age.' Now she is no more, and all is forgotten. For my twenty years of service I must now, in my old age, go out into the street to seek my hard crust of bread ... *God see it and know it, and His holy will be done, just I am sorry for you, childrens!*" Karl Ivanych concluded, drawing me to him by my hand and kissing me on the head.

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[1] Night watchman.
[2] Open up!
[3] Open, in the name of the law!
[4] I gave a blow.
[5] I came to Ems.

Chapter 11

THE POOR MARK

By the end of the year of mourning Grandmother had recovered somewhat from the grief that had stricken her and began occasionally to receive visitors, especially children, boys and girls of our age.

On Lyubochka's birthday, the 13th of December, Princess Kornakova and her daughters, Mme Valakhina and Sonichka, Ilenka Grap and the two younger Ivin brothers arrived before dinner.

We could already hear the sounds of talking, laughter and running about which reached us from below, where the company had assembled, but we could not join them until our morning lessons were over. The schedule hanging in the schoolroom read: "*Lundi, de 2 à 3, Maître d'Histoire et de Géographie*" [1] and it was this *Maître d'Histoire* whom we had to wait for, listen to and see out before we should be free. It was already twenty minutes past two, but the history teacher was as yet neither to be heard of nor seen, not even on the street he was to come by and at which I gazed with a strong desire never to set eyes on him again.

"It seems as if Lebedev isn't coming today," said Volodya, raising his eyes for a moment from Smaragdov's textbook, which he was reading for the lesson.

"I hope to God, I hope to God ... because I don't know a thing ... but wait, I think that's him coming," I added in a dejected voice.

Volodya got up and went to the window.

"No, that's not him, that's some *gentleman*," he said. "We'll wait till half-past two," he added, stretching and at the same time scratching the crown of his head as he usually did when resting for a moment from his studies. "If he does not come by half-past two we can tell St.-Jérôme and put away our exercise books."

"I can't see why he'd want to co-o-o-ome here," I said,

[1] Monday, from 2 to 3, history and geography teacher.

also stretching and flourishing Kaidanov's textbook, which I held in both hands, over my head.

For nothing better to do I opened the book at the page of the lesson assigned to us and began reading it. The lesson was a long and difficult one. I knew nothing and saw that I would by no means have time to learn any of it, especially as I was in that excited state in which one's thoughts refuse to concentrate on any subject.

Lebedev had complained about me to St.-Jérôme after the previous history lesson, which always seemed to me the most tedious and difficult subject, and in my grade book had put down a "2",[1] which was "poor". St.-Jérôme had told me then that if at the next lesson I were to receive less than a "3" I should be severely punished. Now this next lesson was imminent and, I confess, I was very uneasy.

I became so engrossed in reading over the unfamiliar lesson that the thump of overshoes being removed in the hallway startled me. No sooner had I turned around than there appeared in the doorway the pock-marked and to me repulsive face and the too-familiar, clumsy figure of the teacher in his blue buttoned-up dress-coat with the crested buttons.

The teacher slowly laid his cap on the windowsill, our exercise books on the table, separated the tails of his coat with both hands (as though this were very necessary) and sat down, puffing.

"Well, sirs," he said, rubbing one of his clammy hands against the other, "let us first go over what we spoke of during the previous lesson and then I shall endeavor to acquaint you with the further events of the Middle Ages."

That meant: recite your lessons.

While Volodya recited with the ease and assurance natural to those who have a good knowledge of a subject I wandered out to the staircase aimlessly and, as I was not supposed to go down, it was quite natural that I unwittingly found myself on the landing. But just as I was about to take up my usual observation post behind the door

[1] In Russian schools "5" is the highest and "1" is the lowest mark.- *Tr.*

Mimi, who was always the cause of my misfortunes, stumbled upon me. "You? Here?" she said, looking at me sternly, then at the door of the maids' room, and then at me again.

I felt guilty on both counts: because I was not in the schoolroom and because I was in such an improper place, and so was silent and, hanging my head, stood in a most pathetic attitude of repentance.

"Well, this has gone too far!" said Mimi. "What are you doing here?" I said nothing. "Oh, no, you haven't heard the last of this," she said, rapping her knuckles on the banister. "I shall tell the countess everything."

It was five minutes to three when I returned to the schoolroom. The teacher, as though oblivious to either my absence or my presence, was explaining the next lesson to Volodya. When, having finished his explanations, he began stacking our exercise books and Volodya went out to the adjoining room to fetch a ticket, I was struck by a happy thought that all was over and I would be forgotten.

But suddenly the teacher turned to me with a malicious smirk.

"I hope you have learned the lesson, sir," he said, rubbing his hands.

"I have, sir," I replied.

"Be so good as to tell me something about the crusade of Saint Louis," he said, tilting back in his chair and gazing thoughtfully at the floor. "First, you will tell me of the reasons which induced the King of France to take up the cross," he said, raising his brows and pointing his finger at the inkstand, "then you will explain the general characteristics of this campaign," he added, moving his wrist in such a way as though he wanted to catch something, "and, finally, the effects of this campaign on the European states in general," he said, bringing the exercise books down on the left side of the table, "and on the French realm, in particular," he concluded, striking the right side of the table and inclining his head to the right.

I swallowed several times, cleared my throat, tilted my head to one side and was silent. Then, picking up a quill

that lay on the table, I began stripping it, yet still was silent.

"Let me have the quill," said the teacher, holding out his hand. "It may still be of use. Well, sir?"

"Lou ... uh ... Saint Louis was ... was ... was ... a good and wise tsar..."

"A what, sir?"

"A tsar. He took it into his head to go to Jerusalem and *handed over the reins of government* to his mother."

"What was her name, sir?"

"Buh ... buh ... lanka."

"What, sir? Buhlanka?"

I forced a crooked smile.

"Well, sir, perhaps you can add something more to this?" he said sarcastically.

I had nothing to lose. I cleared my throat and launched on a wild discourse. The teacher was silent, flicking dust from the table with the quill he had taken from me, looking fixedly past my ear and intoning: "Good, sir, very good, sir." I felt that I knew nothing, was expressing myself not at all as I ought to and was terribly pained to see that the teacher neither stopped nor corrected me.

"Why did he take it into his head to go to Jerusalem?" he said, repeating my words.

"Because ... that is ... so as to ..."

I was completely at a loss, did not utter another word and felt that if this villain of a teacher were to continue in silence for a whole year, looking at me quizzically, I should still not be able to utter another syllable. The teacher gazed at me for about three minutes, then suddenly his face assumed an expression of profound sorrow and in a mellow voice he said to Volodya, who had just entered the room:

"Let me have the grade book to enter your marks."

Volodya handed him the book and carefully placed the ticket beside it.

The teacher opened the book and, dipping the quill deliberately, in his elegant hand put down a "5" for Volodya in the column for achievement and another in the column for deportment. Then, quill poised over the columns in

which my marks were entered, he looked at me, shook off a drop of ink and reflected.

Suddenly, his hand made a barely discernible movement and in the first column there appeared a beautifully-written "1" and a dot; another movement, and in the column for deportment another "1" and a dot.

Carefully closing the grade book, the teacher rose and went to the door, as though unaware of my gaze in which despair, entreaty and reproach were expressed.

"Mikhail Larionych!" I cried.

"No," he replied, knowing in advance what I wished to say. "One cannot learn anything this way. I do not wish to accept money for nothing."

The teacher put on his overshoes, his camlet greatcoat and tied his scarf with great care. As though one could attach importance to anything after what had happened to me. For him it was a flourish of the quill, but for me it was the greatest of misfortunes.

"Is the lesson over?" St.-Jérôme inquired, entering the room.

"Yes."

"Was the teacher pleased with you?"

"Yes," said Volodya.

"What is your mark?"

"Five."

"And Nicolas?"

I was silent.

"I think a four," said Volodya.

He understood that I must be rescued, if only for today. No matter if I were punished, but only not today when we had company.

"*Voyons, messieurs*[1] (St.-Jérôme was in the habit of prefacing everything he said with *voyons*) *Faites votre toilette et descendons.*[2]

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[1] Now then, gentlemen.

[2] Make yourselves tidy and let us go downstairs.

Chapter 12

THE LITTLE KEY

No sooner had we on coming downstairs greeted all the visitors than we were called in to dinner. Papa was very jolly (he had been winning at cards of late), had given Lyubochka an expensive silver tea service and at dinner remembered that he had left a bonbonnière that he had gotten for her in his wing of the house.

"Instead of sending a servant I think you had better go, Coco," Papa said to me. "The keys are on the big table in a shell, d'you know? Take them and unlock the second drawer on the right with the largest key. You will find a box there and bonbons wrapped up in paper. Bring everything here."

"Shall I bring you your cigars?" I asked, knowing that he always sent for them after dinner.

"Yes, do, but mind you don't touch anything!" he called after me.

Having found the keys in the place indicated, I was about to unlock the drawer when I was diverted by a desire to discover what the tiny key on the same key ring unlocked.

On the writing table amidst countless other objects there stood by the little rail an embroidered case with a small padlock on it and I wanted to see whether the little key would fit it. The experiment was a great success, the case opened and I found in it a whole sheaf of papers. A burning curiosity persuaded me so convincingly to see what these papers were that I had no time to listen to the voice of conscience and took to examining the contents of the case...

. . . . . .

The childish feeling of unquestioning respect for all my elders, especially for Papa, was so strong in me that my mind instinctively refused to draw any conclusions from what I saw. I felt that Papa must live in a world quite apart, wondrous, unattainable and incomprehensible to me, and that an attempt to delve into the secrets of his life would be, on my part, something akin to sacrilege.

That is why the discoveries I had made quite nearly by chance in Papa's case left no clear impression on me beyond a dim realization that I had done something reprehensible. I was ashamed and ill at ease.

Under the influence of this feeling I wanted to lock the case as quickly as possible, but I was evidently fated to experience every kind of misfortune on that memorable day: fitting the little key into the keyhole, I turned it the wrong way; thinking that I had locked it, I pulled out the key and–O horrors!–I had in my hand only the loop. I attempted in vain to join it to the half that remained in the lock and by some magic to extract it from there; at last I had to resign myself to the dreadful thought that I had committed a new crime which would be discovered that very day, as soon as Papa returned to his study.

Mimi's complaint, the poor mark and the little key! Nothing worse could have happened to me. Grandmother, because of Mimi's complaint, St.-Jérôme, because of the "1" and Papa, because of the key ... and all this would come crashing down upon me no later than that very evening.

"What will happen to me? Ohh! What have I done?" I moaned, pacing up and down on the soft carpet of the study. "Ah!" I said to myself, taking out the bonbons and cigars, "*What can't be cured must be endured* ..." and I ran back to the house.

This fatalistic saying, overheard in childhood from Nikolai, has had, in all the difficult moments of my life, a beneficial, temporarily soothing effect on me. When I entered the ballroom I was in a somewhat agitated and unnatural but extremely cheerful frame of mind.

Chapter 13

THE TRAITRESS

After dinner we played *petits jeux*[1] and I took a very lively part in them. While playing "cat-and-mouse" I ran

[1] Parlor games.

clumsily into the Kornakovs' governess, who was playing with us, accidentally trod on her dress and tore it. Noting that all the girls, and especially Sonichka, were very pleased to see the governess so put out and forced to retire to the maids' room to mend her dress, I resolved to afford them this pleasure once again. In consequence of this amiable intention, as soon as the governess returned to the room I began prancing around her and continued these evolutions until I found an opportune moment to catch my heel in her skirt again and tear it. Sonichka and the princesses could scarcely keep from laughing, which flattered my vanity most agreeably, but St.-Jérôme, having evidently noticed my pranks, came up to me and, knitting his brows (something I could not bear), remarked that I had apparently become too excited for my own good and that if I did not act more sedately he would make me repent, party or no party.

But I was in the agitated condition of one who has lost more at cards than he has in his pocket, who is afraid to tally up his score and continues to bid desperately, without hope of recovering his losses but merely not to allow himself time to stop and reflect. I smiled insolently and strode away from him.

After "cat-and-mouse" someone suggested a game which we called, I believe, *Lange Nase*.[1] The object of the game was, having set up two rows of chairs, one facing the other with the girls and boys divided into two teams, to take turns in choosing partners.

The youngest princess always chose the youngest Ivin, Katenka chose either Volodya or Ilenka, but Sonichka invariably chose Seryozha and was not at all embarrassed, to my extreme astonishment, when Seryozha went right up and sat down opposite her. She laughed her sweet, tinkling laugh and indicated by a nod that he had guessed correctly. No one, however, chose me. To the extreme mortification of my pride I realized that I was an extra, *the one who was left*, that each time they would have to ask about me: "*Who else is left?*" "*Oh, yes, Nikolenka. Well, then, you take him.*"

[1] Long Nose.

That is why, when it was my turn to choose, I would go straight up to my sister or to one of the ugly princesses and, unfortunately, was never mistaken. Sonichka, however, seemed so taken with Seryozha Ivin that I had ceased to exist for her. I do not know on what grounds I mentally called her *traitress*, for she had never promised to choose me and not Seryozha, but I was firmly convinced that she was treating me most ignobly.

When the game was over I noticed that the *traitress*, whom I despised but from whom, however, I could not take my eyes, had gone off with Seryozha and Katenka into a corner and that they were mysteriously discussing something. Creeping up behind the piano to discover their secret I saw the following: Katenka was holding up a cambric handkerchief by two corners to make a screen, hiding Seryozha and Sonichka's heads. "No, you've lost, now pay up!" Seryozha was saying. Sonichka stood facing him like a culprit, arms at her sides, and said, blushing: "No, I have not lost, have I, Mlle Catherine?" "I respect the truth," Katenka replied. "You've lost the wager, *ma chère*."

No sooner had Katenka uttered these words than Seryozha stooped over and kissed Sonichka. He just up and kissed her rosy lips. And Sonichka laughed, as though it were nothing, as though it were very amusing. How dreadful!!! *Oh, perfidious traitress*!

Chapter 14

MY REASON IS OBSCURED

I suddenly felt contemptuous of the female sex in general and Sonichka in particular: I began assuring myself that there was nothing amusing about these games, that they were only fit for *girls*, and I was overcome by a desire to act wildly and to play some bold prank that would astonish everyone. An opportunity was not long in presenting itself.

St.-Jérôme, having spoken of something with Mimi, left the room; the sound of his footsteps was heard first on the stairs and then overhead, proceeding in the direction of the schoolroom. I supposed that Mimi had told him where she had seen me during the lesson and that he had gone to inspect the grade book. I did not at the time attribute to St.-Jérôme any other aim in life except a desire to punish me. I have read somewhere that children between twelve and fourteen years of age, that is, those approaching adolescence, are particularly inclined to arson, and even murder. Recalling my own adolescence and especially the state of mind I was in on that unfortunate day of my life, I can fully appreciate the possibility of a most terrible crime being committed, without aim, without any intent to injure, but *just so*, out of curiosity, to satisfy an unconscious craving for action. There are moments when the future presents itself to a person in such a gloomy light that he cannot allow his thoughts to dwell on it, refuses to allow his mind to function and tries to convince himself that there can be no future and that there was no past. At such moments, when the mind does not consider in advance each manifestation of the will and the only incentives that remain in life are the carnal instincts, I can understand that a child, through inexperience being especially susceptible to such a condition, may without the least hesitation or fear, with a smile of curiosity, build and fan a fire under his own house in which his brothers, father and mother, all of whom he dearly loves, are sleeping. Under the influence of such temporary absence of thought, absence of mind, almost, a peasant boy of seventeen, examining the edge of a newly-honed axe near the bench on which his old father lies face-downwards, sleeping, suddenly swings the axe and looks on with stupid curiosity as the blood runs under the bench from the severed neck; under the influence of the same absence of thought and of instinctive curiosity a person finds a certain pleasure in standing at the very edge of a cliff and thinking: what if I jump? Or in placing a loaded pistol to his temple and thinking: what if I pull the trigger? Or in looking at some very distinguished man, whom all of society treats with servile respect, and thinking: what if

I go up to him, take him by the nose and say: "Now then, my good man, come along."

Under the influence of just such inward excitement and absence of thought, when St.-Jérôme came down and told me that I had no right to be there because I had behaved and studied so poorly and that I must go upstairs at once, I stuck my tongue out at him and said that I would not go anywhere.

For a moment St.-Jérôme was too stunned and angered to utter a word.

"*C'est bien*," [1] he said, catching up with me. "I have often promised to punish you, but your grandmother wished to spare you. Now, however, I see that nothing but a rod will teach you obedience and today you have earned it full well."

He said this so loudly that everyone heard him. The blood rushed with unusual force to my heart. I could feel the color draining from my face, and my lips began to quiver quite uncontrollably. I must have looked terrible at that moment, for St.-Jérôme, avoiding my eyes came up to me quickly and seized me by the arm; but the moment I felt the touch of his hand I became so incensed that beside myself from rage I snatched my own away and struck him with all my childish might.

"What's the matter with you?" Volodya said, coming up to me after having observed what I had done with stupefaction.

"Leave me alone!" I shrieked at him through my tears. "None of you care for me! You don't understand how miserable I am! You're all horrid and disgusting!" I added hysterically, addressing the entire gathering.

But at that moment St.-Jérôme, his face pale and determined, again approached me; and before I had a chance to resist, he had with one swift movement pinioned both my arms as in a vice and was dragging me away. My head was spinning from agitation. All I remember is that I thrashed out wildly with my head and knees as long as

[1] Very well.

my strength lasted; I recall that my nose brushed against someone's thighs several times, that someone's coat got into my mouth, that I was aware of the presence all around me of others' feet, a smell of dust and of *violette*, the scent which St.-Jérôme used.

Five minutes later the door of the storeroom closed behind me.

"Vasily!" said *he* in a revolting, triumphant voice. "Bring me the rod." . . . . . .

Chapter 15

REVERIE

Could I possibly have believed at the time that I would survive all the misfortunes that had befallen me and that the day would dawn when I should calmly recall them?

Thinking over what I had done, I could not imagine what would befall me but I had a vague premonition that I was doomed.

At first, downstairs and all around me there reigned complete silence, or at least so it seemed to me from the excessive agitation within me, but little by little I began to distinguish various sounds. Vasily came upstairs and, tossing some object that might have been a broom on the windowsill, stretched out, yawning, on the chest. St.-Jérôme's loud voice drifted up from below (he was no doubt talking about me), then children's voices, then laughter, running about, and in a few minutes everything in the house had returned to its former bustle, as though no one knew or cared about me sitting in the dark storeroom.

I did not cry, yet something as heavy as a stone lay on my heart. Thoughts and visions passed swiftly through my feverish brain, but the memory of the misfortune which had befallen me continually interrupted their fantastic sequence and I again entered the inextricable maze of conjecture as to the fate that awaited me, despair and fear.

Now I would imagine that there must be some unknown reason for the general dislike and even hatred of me. (At the time I was firmly convinced that everyone, from my grandmother down to Philip, the driver, hated me and rejoiced in my suffering.) "I must not be the son of my mother and my father, not Volodya's brother, but a poor orphan, a foundling, taken in for charity's sake," I say to myself, and this absurd idea not only affords me some sad consolation but even seems quite plausible. I am happy to think that I am unfortunate not because I am to blame, but because such has my fate been from the very day of my birth and that my lot resembles the lot of poor Karl Ivanych.

"But why keep this secret any longer now that I myself have already learned it?" I say to myself. "Tomorrow then I will go to Papa and say to him: 'Papa! There is no point in your hiding the secret of my birth from me; I know it.' He will say: 'It can't be helped, my boy. Sooner or later you would have discovered it: you are not my son, but I adopted you, and if you prove worthy of my love, then I shall never abandon you'; and I shall say to him: 'Papa, though I have no right to call you by this name – I am now uttering it for the last time – I have always loved you and always shall, and shall never forget that you are my benefactor, but I can no longer remain in your house. No one loves me here, and St.-Jérôme has vowed to see me dead. Either he or I must leave your house, because I am not responsible for my actions, to such a degree do I detest this man that I might do anything. I shall kill him.' That is just what I would say: 'Papa, I shall kill him.' Papa will begin to plead with me, but I shall shrug and say to him: 'No, my dear, my benefactor, we cannot live together, so let me go', and I will embrace him and say to him, speaking in French for some reason: "*Oh mon père, oh mon bienfaiteur, donne-moi pour la dernière fois ta bénédiction et que la volonté de Dieu soit faite!*" [1] And sitting on a chest in the dark storeroom I sob loudly at this thought. But sud-

[1] Oh, my father, oh, my benefactor, give me your blessing for the last time, and may God's will be done!

denly I recall the shameful punishment awaiting me, reality appears to me in its true light and my dreams vanish instantly.

Next I imagine myself already free and out in the world. I enlist in the hussars and go off to war. The enemy attacks me from all quarters, I brandish my sabre and kill one. Another flourish and I kill a second, a third. At last, faint from wounds and exhaustion, I fall to the ground and cry: "Victory!" The general rides up to me and asks: "Where is he, our saviour?" He is directed to me, he throws himself upon my breast and with tears of joy in his eyes he cries: "Victory!" I recover and stroll down Tverskoi Boulevard with my arm in a black sling. "I am a general! Suddenly the *Tsar* encounters me and inquires as to who that wounded young man is. He is told it is the famous hero, Nikolai. The Tsar comes up to me and says: "I thank you. You shall have whatever you ask of me." I bow reverently and, leaning on my sabre, I say: "I am happy, Sire, to have been able to shed my blood for my country and would gladly die for it; but if you are so gracious as to permit me to ask something of you, I have only one wish: allow me to destroy my enemy, the foreigner, St.-Jérôme. I wish to annihilate my enemy, St.-Jérôme." Wrathfully, I face St.-Jérôme and say to him: "You were the cause of my misfortune. *A genoux!*"[1] But suddenly it occurs to me that at any moment the real St.-Jérôme might enter with the rod, and I once again see myself not as a general saving his country but as a most wretched, piteous creature.

Next I think of God and I defiantly ask Him why He is punishing me. "I don't believe I have forgotten to say my prayers, morning and evening, so why then should I suffer?" I can positively say that the first step towards the religious doubts that beset me during adolescence was taken now, not because misfortune had led me to revolt and to disbelief, but because the thought of the injustice of Providence, which entered my mind at this time of complete mental anguish and day-long seclusion, began

[1] Down on your knees!

rapidly to germinate and take root as an evil seed which after the rain has fallen on soft earth.

Next I imagined that I should certainly die and vividly pictured to myself the surprise of St.-Jérôme on finding in the storeroom a lifeless corpse instead of me. Recalling Natalia Savishna's stories of the souls of the deceased remaining in their homes for forty days, in my imagination I fly invisibly after my death through all the rooms of Grandmother's house and overhear Lyubochka's sincere weeping, Grandmother's lamentation and Papa's conversation with St.-Jérôme. "He was a fine boy," Papa will say with tears in his eyes. "Yes," St.-Jérôme will reply, "but a terrible prankster." "You should respect the dead," Papa will say. "You were the cause of his death, you frightened him, he could not bear the humiliation you had in store for him... Begone, villain!"

And St.-Jérôme will fall to his knees, will weep and beg to be forgiven. After forty days my soul rises to heaven; there I behold something wondrously beautiful, white, transparent and tall and feel that it is my mother. This something white surrounds and caresses me, but I feel anxious and seem not to recognize her. "If it is really you," I say, "then appear to me more clearly so that I might embrace you." And her voice answers me: "Here we are all like this. I cannot embrace you any closer. Are you not happy as it is?" "Oh, I am very happy, but you cannot tickle me, and I cannot kiss your hands..." "This is unnecessary, it is wondrous here as it is," she says and I feel that, indeed, it is wondrous, and together we soar higher and higher. At this point I seem to awaken and find myself again on the chest in the dark storeroom, my cheeks wet with tears and senselessly repeating: *and we soar higher and higher.* For a long time I try my best to clarify my situation, but in my mind's eye I visualize in the present only a terribly gloomy, impenetrable distance. I attempt to return again to those happy, comforting dreams which a returning consciousness of reality has interrupted but, to my surprise, as soon as I enter the drift of my former reverie I see it is impossible to continue it and, most astonishing of all, it no longer affords me any pleasure.

Chapter 16

IT WILL ALL COME RIGHT IN THE END

I spent the night in the storeroom and no one came to see me; only the next day, that is, on Sunday, was I taken to a small room adjoining the schoolroom and locked in again. I was beginning to hope that my punishment would be limited to confinement and my thoughts, under the influence of a sweet, refreshing sleep, the bright sunshine playing on the frosty patterns on the windowpanes and the usual daytime noises on the street, were beginning to calm down. But the solitude was, all the same, very oppressive: I wanted to move about, to tell someone of all that had accumulated in my heart, but there was not a living soul to talk to. This situation was further aggravated because, repulsive as it was to me, I could not help hearing St.-Jérôme walking about in his room calmly whistling merry airs. I was absolutely convinced that he did not want to whistle at all but that he did it only to torment me.

At two o'clock St.-Jérôme and Volodya went downstairs, while Nikolai brought me my dinner, and when I got into conversation with him about what I had done and what awaited me, he said:

"Eh, sir! Don't fret. It'll all come right in the end."

Though this saying, which later in life was also to keep up my spirits on more than one occasion, consoled me somewhat, the very fact that I had been sent not bread and water but a complete dinner, even including pastries, caused me to reflect seriously. If they had not sent me the pastries it would have meant that being locked up was my punishment; but this meant that I had not yet been punished, that I had only been removed from the others as a wicked person and that my punishment lay ahead. While I was debating this question a key turned in the lock of my prison and St.-Jérôme entered with a grim, official look on his face.

"Come to your grandmother," said he without glancing at me.

Before leaving the room I wished to brush the sleeves of

my jacket that had become dusted with chalk but St.-Jérôme told me that this was quite unnecessary, as though I were already in such a deplorable moral condition that it was not worth troubling about my appearance.

Katenka, Lyubochka and Volodya stared at me as St.-Jérôme led me by the hand through the ballroom with exactly the same kind of expressions with which we usually stared at the convicts who were led past our windows on Mondays. When I went up to Grandmother's armchair with the intention of kissing her hand she turned away from me and hid her hand under her mantilla.

"Yes, my dear," she said after a protracted silence during which she examined me from head to toe with such a look that I did not know where to hide my eyes or hands, "I may well say that you really set great store by my affection and are a true comfort to me. Monsieur St.-Jérôme, who, at my request," she added, drawing out each word, "undertook your education no longer wishes to remain in my house. Why? Because of you, my dear. I had hoped that you would be grateful," she continued after a short pause and in a tone of voice that showed her speech had been prepared in advance, "for his care and trouble, that you would be able to appreciate his services, but you, an impudent child, have dared to strike him. Very good! Splendid! I, too, am beginning to think that you are incapable of appreciating gentle treatment, that you are in need of other, baser measures... Apologize this instant," she added in a severe and admonishing voice, pointing to St.-Jérôme. "Do you hear?"

I followed the direction of Grandmother's hand and catching sight of St.-Jérôme's frock-coat averted my face and did not move from the spot, once again beginning to feel my heart sink.

"Well, then? Do you not hear what I am saying?"

I trembled all over, but did not move.

"Coco!" said Grandmother, evidently noticing the mental anguish that I suffered. "Coco," she said in a voice that was no longer imperious, but gentle, "can this be you?"

"Grandmother! I won't beg his forgiveness for anything ..." I cried, suddenly stopping short, feeling that if

I uttered another word I should not be able to hold back the tears that were choking me.

"I command you to. I beg you to. Well, then?"

"I ... I ... don't ... want ... I can't," I mumbled and the suppressed sobs that were pent up in my breast suddenly swept away the barrier that had held them back and they burst forth in a desperate flood.

"*C'est ainsi que vous obéissez à votre seconde mère, c'est ainsi que vous reconnaissez ses bontés*," [1] said St.-Jérôme in a dramatic voice. "*A genoux!*"

"Oh, Lord, what if she saw this!" said Grandmother, turning her face away from me and wiping the tears that appeared in her eyes. "If she saw ... it is all for the best. No, she would not have endured this grief, would not have endured it."

And Grandmother wept more and more. I wept, too, but did not for a moment consider apologizing.

"*Tranquillisez-vous au nom du ciel, Madame la Comtesse*," [2] said St.-Jérôme.

But Grandmother was no longer listening to him. She buried her face in her hands and her sobbing soon turned into hiccoughs and hysterics. Mimi and Gasha came running into the room with frightened faces; there was an odor of spirits, and the whole house was suddenly filled with hurrying feet and whispering.

"I hope you are pleased by what you have done," said St.-Jérôme as he marched me back upstairs.

"My God, what have I done? What a terrible criminal I am!"

Scarcely had St.-Jérôme, having taken me to my room, gone back downstairs, than I, mindless of what I was doing, ran down the main staircase which led to the street.

I cannot recall whether I intended to run away from home altogether or drown myself; all I know is that, covering my face with my hands so as to see no one, I ran farther and farther down the stairs.

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[1] This is the way you obey your second mother, this is how you repay her kindness.

[2] Calm yourself, for heaven's sake, Countess.

"Where are you going?" a familiar voice suddenly asked me. "You are just the one I want to see, my boy."

I wanted to run past, but Papa caught hold of my arm and spoke severely:

"Come along with me, my boy! How dared you touch the case in my study?" he said, pulling me after him into the small sitting room. "Well? Have you nothing to say? Well?" he added, taking me by the ear.

"I'm sorry," I said, "I don't know what came over me."

"Ah, you don't know what came over you, don't know, don't know, don't know," he repeated tweaking my ear at each word. "Will you ever again poke your nose into things that do not concern you? Will you? Will you?"

Though I felt a searing pain in my ear I did not cry, but experienced a pleasant sensation of relief. The moment Papa let go of my ear I seized his hand and tearfully began to cover it with kisses.

"Strike me again," I said through my tears, "harder, more painfully! I'm no good, I'm horrid, I'm a miserable wretch!"

"What's the matter with you?" he asked, pushing me away slightly.

"No, I won't, not for anything!" I cried, clinging to his coat. "Everyone hates me, I know it, but for heaven's sake, listen to me, protect me, or turn me out of the house! I cannot live with him. *He* tries his best to humiliate me, he orders me to kneel before him, he wants to thrash me. I cannot stand it, I am not a baby, I shall not be able to endure it, I'll die, I'll kill myself. *He* told Grandmother that I was a good-for-nothing; she is ill now, she will die because of me, I ... can't ... with him ... for heaven's sake, thrash me ... why ... do ... they ... torment ... me."

Tears were choking me. I sat down on the sofa and, unable to continue, fell with my head on his knee, sobbing so that it seemed to me I should die that very moment.

"What's all this about, son?" Papa said tenderly, bending over me.

"*He* bullies me ... torments me ... I shall die ... nobody loves me!" I managed to gasp and then had convulsions.

Papa picked me up and carried me into the bedroom. I fell asleep.

When I awoke it was very late. A solitary candle was burning by my bedside and in the room sat our family doctor, Mimi and Lyubochka. Their faces indicated that they were alarmed by my condition, but I felt so wonderful and buoyant after a sleep of twelve hours that I should have jumped out of bed at once if I were not reluctant to shake their belief in my being gravely ill.

Chapter 17

HATRED

Yes, this was a genuine feeling of hatred, not the hatred they write about in novels and in which I do not believe, a hatred which is supposed to find satisfaction in doing someone harm, but the hatred which fills you with an overpowering aversion for a person who yet deserves your respect and causes his hair, his neck, his gait, the sound of his voice, all his limbs, all his movements to seem repulsive to you, while at the same time some incomprehensible force draws you to him and compels you to follow his every action with uneasy attention. I experienced this feeling towards St.-Jérôme.

St.-Jérôme had been with us for a year and a half. In judging this man cool-headedly now I find that he was a good Frenchman, but a Frenchman to the highest degree. He was quite clever, rather well educated and fulfilled his duties towards us conscientiously but he possessed, common to his fellow-countrymen and so contrary to the Russian character, the distinctive features of frivolous egotism, vanity, insolence and the conceit of ignorance. I disliked all of this in the extreme. Needless to say, Grandmother had explained her views on corporal punishment to him and he did not dare to thrash us; but in spite of this he often threatened us, and especially me,

with the rod and uttered the word *fouetter*[1] (pronouncing it *fouatter*) as disgustingly and in such a tone of voice as though it would have given him the greatest of pleasures to whip me.

I did not at all fear the pain of a punishment which I had never experienced but the very thought that St.-Jérôme might strike me plunged me into a terrible state of abject despair and fury.

On occasion Karl Ivanych, in a moment of irritation, had personally chastised us with a ruler or his braces, but I recall this without the least annoyance. Even at the time I am speaking of (when I was fourteen years old), if Karl Ivanych were to strike me I should have borne his blows unperturbedly. I loved Karl Ivanych, remembered him for as far back as I could remember and was accustomed to consider him as a member of the family; but St.-Jérôme was an arrogant, self-satisfied man for whom I felt nothing save the involuntary respect with which all *grown-ups* inspired me. Karl Ivanych was a comical old man whom I loved with all my heart but placed, nevertheless, beneath myself in my childish comprehension of social standing.

St.-Jérôme on the other hand, was an educated, handsome young dandy who tried to put himself on an equal footing with anyone. Karl Ivanych always scolded and punished us dispassionately. One could see that he considered this a necessary, yet disagreeable duty. St.-Jérôme, on the contrary, liked to assume the role of a mentor; one could see when he punished us that he did it rather for his own pleasure than for our benefit. He was carried away by his own importance. I found his pompous French phrases, which he pronounced with a strong emphasis on the last syllable of each word with *accent circonflex'es*, unspeakably obnoxious. Karl Ivanych, when he became angry, would say "a puppet show, bat boy, Spanish fly". St.-Jérôme called us *mauvais sujet, vilain garnement*[2] and so on, which insulted my pride.

Karl Ivanych made us kneel in a corner facing the wall,

[1] To whip.
[2] Bad lot, scoundrel.

and the punishment lay in the physical pain brought on by such a position; St-Jérôme, thrusting out his chest and with a grand gesture of his hand would exclaim in a theatrical voice: "*A genoux, mauvais sujet*!", ordering us to kneel facing him and beg his pardon. The punishment lay in the humiliation.

I was not punished, and no one mentioned what had happened to me, but I could not forget all I had experienced during those two days: the despair, the shame, the fear and the hatred. Although from then on St.-Jérôme, as it seemed, had washed his hands of me and scarcely paid any attention to me, I could not come to regard him with indifference. Each time our eyes happened to meet it seemed to me that my look expressed a too-obvious animosity and I hastened to assume a nonchalant air, but then it seemed to me that he saw through my pretence. I would blush and altogether avert my face.

In a word, it was terribly difficult for me to have anything to do with him whatsoever.

Chapter 18

THE MAIDS' ROOM

I was beginning to feel more and more lonely, and my chief pleasures lay in solitary reflection and observation. I shall speak of the subject of my reflections in the following chapter; the scene of my observations, however, was chiefly the maids' room where a romance was in progress which I found most absorbing and touching. The heroine of this love story, needless to say, was Masha. She was in love with Vasily, who had known her five years before and who had already then promised to marry her. Fate, which had parted them, had brought them together again in Grandmother's house but had placed an obstacle in the way of their mutual affection in the person of Nikolai (Masha's uncle). He would not even hear of his niece's marrying Vasily, whom he called a *no-good, headstrong lout.*

The obstacle caused the formerly rather easygoing and inattentive Vasily to suddenly fall in love with Masha, and to fall in love as only a domestic serf who had been trained as a tailor and who wore a pink shirt and had pomaded hair ever could.

Although the manifestations of his love were very odd and inappropriate (for instance, on encountering Masha he would always try to hurt her, either by pinching her or slapping her, or squeezing her so hard that she could scarcely breathe), yet his love itself was sincere, as is proven by the fact that when Nikolai had definitely refused him his niece's hand Vasily *took to drink*, began haunting the taverns, acting wildly and, in a word, behaving so badly that he was often subjected to shameful corporal punishment in the police office. But these actions and their consequences, it seemed, were meritorious in Masha's eyes and further increased her love for him. When Vasily was locked up in the police station Masha wept for days on end, bemoaned her bitter lot to Gasha (who took a genuine interest in the affairs of the unhappy lovers) and, scorning the curses and blows of her uncle, would sneak off to the police station to visit and console her swain.

Do not disdain, dear reader, the company into which I am introducing you. If the strings of love and compassion have not gone slack in your soul then in the maids' room, too, chords will be found to which they will respond. Whether you care to follow me or not, I am going to the staircase landing from where I can see all that goes on in the maids' room. Here is the ledge of the brick oven on which are set a flat-iron, a papier-mâché doll with a chipped nose and a jug and basin; here is the windowsill on which lie in disorder a piece of black wax, a spool of silk, a cucumber with a piece bitten off it and a bonbon box; here is the large old mahogany table on which, on an unfinished piece of needlework, lies a weight made of a chintz-covered brick and at which *she* is sitting in my favorite pink gingham dress and light-blue kerchief, which especially attracts my attention. *She* is sewing, stopping occasionally to scratch her head with her needle or to trim the candle and I look on and wonder: "Why was she not

born a lady with those light-blue eyes, that thick honey-colored braid and full bosom? How well it would suit her to sit in the drawing room in a cap with pink ribbons and a crimson silk gown, not like Mimi's but like the one I saw on Tverskoi Boulevard. She would be embroidering something in an embroidery hoop and I would watch her in the glass, and no matter what she would wish for, I would do anything for her; I would help her on with her cloak and would serve her myself at dinner..."

And what a drunken face and repulsive figure that Vasily has in his tight frock-coat put on over the dirty pink shirt worn over his trousers! In every movement of his body, in every curve of his back I seem to see the unmistakable signs of the revolting punishment that has been meted out to him...

"What, Vasya? Again..." said Masha, sticking her needle into a pincushion and not looking up when Vasily entered.

"What of it? You can't expect any good of *him*," Vasily replied. "If only he'd decide it one way or another; because I'm going to ruin for nothing, and all on account of *him*."

"Will you have some tea?" said Nadezhda, another maid.

"I thank you kindly. And why does he hate me, that thief, your uncle, why? Because I have proper clothes, because I look smart, because of the way I walk. In a word. Eh!" Vasily concluded with a shrug.

"One should be meek," said Masha, biting off a thread, "but you keep..."

"I can't stand it any more, that's what!"

Just then there was the sound of a door closing in Grandmother's room and Gasha's grumbling voice was heard as she climbed the stairs.

"Go try to please her when she doesn't know what she wants herself... This confounded, miserable life! If it'd only be one thing, God forgive me my sins," she mumbled, waving her hands about.

"My respects to you, Agafia Mikhailovna," said Vasily, rising as she entered.

"Oh, go on! I've no time for your respects now," she snapped, looking at him wrathfully. "And why d'you keep coming here? Is the maids' room a place for a man to be?"

"I wanted to find out how you were," Vasily said meekly.

"I'll give up the ghost soon, that's how I am!" Agafia Mikhailovna shrilled.

Vasily laughed.

"It's no laughing matter! And if I say get out, then be off! Look at the brute, all set to get married the scoundrel! Go on, get out!"

And Agafia Mikhailovna, stamping loudly, went through to her room, slamming the door so hard the windowpanes rattled.

She could be heard for a long time after railing at one and all behind the partition and cursing her life. She flung her things about and pulled the ears of her pet cat. At last the door opened a crack and out flew the cat, tossed out by the tail and meowing pitifully.

"Seems like I'd better come for tea some other time," said Vasily in a whisper. "Till we meet again."

"Never mind her," said Nadezhda with a wink. "I'll go have a look at the samovar."

"Well, I'll bring it all to an end," Vasily went on, seating himself closer to Masha as soon as Nadezhda had left the room. "I'll either go straight to the countess and say: 'It's like this,' or else ... I'll quit all this and run off to the end of the world. I swear to God."

"Leaving me all alone?"

"You're the only one I care for, or else I'd have been a free man lo-o-ong ago, I swear to God, I swear to God."

"Why don't you bring me your shirts to wash, Vasya?" said Masha after a moment's silence. "Here, see how dirty it is," she added, taking hold of his shirt collar.

Just then Grandmother's bell was heard downstairs and Gasha came out of her room.

"Now what are you trying to get out of her, you brute?" she said, pushing Vasily, who had risen hurriedly at the sight of her, towards the door. "Look what a pass

you've brought the girl to, and you still pester her, seems it makes you happy, you wretch, to see her tears. Go on. Don't let me catch you here again. And what d'you see in him?" she continued, turning to Masha. "Hasn't your uncle beaten you hard enough today on account of him? Still, you keep at it: I won't marry anyone but Vasily Gruskov. You fool!"

"And I won't marry anyone. I don't love anyone else, you can beat me to death for him," mumbled Masha, suddenly bursting into tears.

For a long time I watched Masha wiping away her tears with her kerchief as she lay on the chest; trying my best to alter my opinion of Vasily, I endeavored to discover that point of view from which it was possible for him to seem so attractive to her. But though I sincerely sympathized with her sorrow I simply could not understand how such a charming creature, as Masha appeared to be in my eyes, could love Vasily.

"When I am grown up," I said to myself, returning to my room upstairs, "I shall inherit Petrovskoye and Vasily and Masha will be my serfs. I shall sit in my study and smoke my pipe and Masha will pass through to the kitchen with a flat-iron. I shall say: 'Send Masha in to me.' She will come, and there will be no one else in the room... Suddenly, Vasily will enter, and when he sees Masha he will say: 'I'm done for!' and Masha will also begin to cry; and I shall say: 'Vasily! I know you love her and she loves you, so here are a thousand rubles for you, marry her, and God bless you,' and I shall go off to the sitting room."

Among the innumerable thoughts and daydreams that pass without a trace through the mind and the imagination there are some which leave in them a deep and painful groove so that often, no longer recalling the essence of a thought, you remember that there was something good in your mind, you are conscious of the trace of the thought and try once again to recapture it. A similar deep impression was left in my heart by the thought of sacrificing my love for Masha's happiness, which she could find only in being married to Vasily.

Chapter 19

ADOLESCENCE

One might be surprised at what the favorite and most constantly recurring subjects of my reflections were during my adolescence, so incompatible were they with my age and station. However, in my opinion the incongruity of a person's station with his moral activity is the surest sign of sincerity. During the year in which I led a solitary, introspectively moral life all the abstract questions concerning man's destiny, future life and the immortality of the soul had already presented themselves to me, and my frail, childish mind attempted, with all the fervor of inexperience, to solve those questions, the formulation of which comprises the highest stage the human mind can reach but the solution of which is beyond its grasp.

It seems to me that the human mind in each given individual follows in its development along the same lines as have entire generations, that the thoughts which served as the basis for various philosophic theories are indivisible parts of the mind, but that each person perceived them more or less clearly even before he knew of the existence of philosophic theories.

These thoughts presented themselves to me with such clarity and force that I even tried to apply them to life, imagining that I was the *first* to discover such great and useful truths.

It once occurred to me that happiness does not depend on external causes but on our attitude towards them, that a person accustomed to endure suffering cannot be unhappy, and, to accustom myself to labor and despite the terrible pain, I held Tatishchev's dictionaries at arm's length for five minutes at a time, or went into the storeroom and scourged my bare back with a rope so painfully that tears involuntarily sprang to my eyes.

At one time, recalling suddenly that death awaited me at any hour, at any minute, I decided, not understanding how people had failed to realize this before, that one could only be happy by enjoying the present and not hinking of the future, and for three days under the in-

fluence of this idea I abandoned my lessons and did nothing but lie on my bed, indulging myself by reading a novel and eating ginger honey-cakes which I bought with the last of my pocket money.

At another time, standing in front of the blackboard and drawing various figures on it with chalk, I was suddenly struck by the thought: why is symmetry so pleasing to the eye? What is symmetry? It is an innate feeling, I told myself. On what then is it based? Is there symmetry in everything in life then? On the contrary; this is life – and I drew an oval figure on the board. After life the soul passes into eternity; this is eternity – and I drew a line from one side of the oval figure to the very edge of the board. Why then is there no corresponding line on the other side? And indeed, how can eternity be on one side only? We must have existed before this life though we have lost the recollection of it.

This argument, which seemed to me exceedingly novel and clear and whose logic I can now grasp with difficulty appealed to me extremely. Taking out a sheet of paper, I decided to put it down in writing, but at this such a host of ideas suddenly filled my head that I was obliged to get up and walk across the room. When I came to the window my attention was drawn to the dray horse that pulled the water wagon which the driver was just then hitching up and my thoughts all centered on solving the question: into what sort of an animal or human would this horse's soul enter when it died? At that moment Volodya, passing through the room, smiled at seeing me pondering over something and this smile was sufficient for me to realize that everything I had been thinking about was the most awful nonsense.

I have recounted this event which for some reason I have remembered only to give the reader an idea of what my reflections were like.

However, not one of the philosophic trends possessed me as did scepticism, which at one time brought me to a state verging on insanity. I imagined that no one and nothing existed in the whole world except myself, that objects were not objects at all but images which appeared only when I directed my attention to them and that as

soon as I ceased thinking of them these images instantly vanished. In a word, I agreed with Schelling in the assertion that what existed were not objects but only my attitude towards them. There were moments when, under the influence of this *idée fixe*, I reached such a state of folly that I would sometimes spin around, hoping to catch a void (the *néant*) unawares in the spot where I was not.

What a pitiful, trivial spring of mental activity is the human mind!

My feeble intellect could not penetrate the impenetrable and in this effort it lost, one after another, the convictions which, to assure my happiness in life, I ought never to have dared to question.

From all this exhaustive mental toil I obtained nothing save a flexibility of reasoning that weakened my willpower and a habit of constant mental analysis that destroyed the spontaneity of my feelings and the clarity of my mind.

Abstract thoughts are formed as a result of a person's ability to apprehend at a given moment the state of his soul and to relegate it to memory. My penchant for abstract reasoning so unnaturally developed my consciousness and to such a degree that often, when thinking about the simplest thing, I would be trapped in a vicious circle of analyzing my thoughts, finding that I was no longer thinking about the question which occupied me, but was thinking of that of which I was thinking. Asking myself: what am I thinking of? I would reply: I am thinking of what I am thinking of. And now what am I thinking of? I am thinking that I am thinking of what I am thinking of, and so on. It was enough to drive me mad.

However, the philosophical discoveries I made flattered my vanity immensely: I often imagined myself to be a great man discovering new truths for the good of humanity and I looked upon all other mortals with a proud conviction of my own worthiness; but, strangely enough, on encountering these mortals I quailed, and the higher I set myself in my own estimation the less capable was I in my encounters with others of not only displaying

a consciousness of my own worth but even of teaching myself to avoid being ashamed of my every most simple word and movement.

Chapter 20

VOLODYA

Indeed, the farther I proceed in the description of this period of my life the more painful and difficult it becomes for me. Rarely, so rarely do I find among the memories of this time moments of genuine warmth of feeling that so brightly and constantly illumined my early years. I unconsciously wish to hurry through the desert of adolescence and to reach that happy time when once again a truly tender and noble sentiment of friendship lit up the end of this period and formed the beginning of a new one, full of charm and poetry: the time of youth.

I will not pursue my reminiscences hour by hour but will cast a swift glance at the most important of them, from the time to which I have brought my story to the beginning of my friendship with a remarkable person who had a decisive and beneficial influence upon my character and ideas.

Volodya is to enter the University in a few days. Tutors come to study with him separately and I listen with envy and involuntary respect as he, tapping the blackboard briskly with the chalk, speaks of functions, sines, coordinates and so on, which seem to me to be the expressions of an inaccessible wisdom. And then one Sunday after dinner all the tutors and two professors assemble in Grandmother's sitting room and in the presence of Papa and several guests stage a rehearsal of the University examinations in which Volodya, to Grandmother's delight, reveals extraordinary knowledge. I am also asked some questions in several subjects but I cut a very poor figure and the professors make an obvious effort to conceal my ignorance from Grandmother, which fact embarrasses me still more. However, little attention is actually paid to me: I am only fifteen years old; therefore, I still have a year

until my examinations. Volodya only comes down to dinner and spends all his days and even his evenings upstairs at his studies, not because he is compelled to, but of his own free will. He is extremely ambitious and wants to pass the examinations with honors, not merely satisfactorily.

And now the day of the first examination has dawned. Volodya puts on a blue dress-coat with brass buttons, a gold watch and patent-leather boots; Papa's phaeton is brought up to the porch. Nikolai throws back the apron and Volodya and St.-Jérôme drive off to the University. The girls, especially Katenka, look out the window with beaming, excited faces at Volodya's lithe figure as he gets into the carriage. Papa says: "God bless, God bless", and Grandmother, who has also pulled herself to the window, with tears in her eyes and murmuring something keeps crossing Volodya until the phaeton disappears around the corner of the lane.

Volodya returns. Everyone questions him impatiently: "Well? Was it all right? What mark did you get?" But his happy face tells us that all is well. Volodya has got a "5". The following day he is seen off with the same wishes for success and the same anxiety and is welcomed back with the same eagerness and joy. This is repeated for nine days. The last and most difficult examination, in Bible study, takes place on the tenth day. Everyone is gathered by the window, awaiting him with greater impatience than ever. It is already two o'clock but Volodya has not yet returned.

"My goodness! Gracious! There they are! There they are!" cries Lyubochka, her face pressed to the pane.

True enough, sitting beside St.-Jérôme in the phaeton is Volodya, though no longer wearing a blue dress-coat and a gray visored cap but attired in the uniform of a University student with a blue-stitched standing collar, a three-cornered hat and a short gilded sword at his side.

"Oh, if only she were alive!" Grandmother exclaims, seeing Volodya in uniform, and faints away.

Volodya runs into the hall with a radiant face, kisses and embraces me, Lyubochka, Mimi and Katenka, who blushes furiously at this. Volodya is beside himself with

joy. And how handsome he looks in uniform! How becoming the light-blue collar is to his faint black moustache! What a long, slender waist he has and how noble is his bearing! On that memorable day we all dine in Grandmother's rooms and delight shines on all our faces. And t dinner, during the dessert, the butler with a decorously najestic and yet jovial countenance brings in a bottle of hampagne wrapped in a napkin. Grandmother, for the irst time since Mamma's death, takes champagne, drinks i whole glass as she toasts Volodya and again weeps for oy as she looks at him. Volodya now drives out alone in iis own carriage, receives *his own* friends in *his own* room, imokes, goes to balls, and I even saw him and his friends ɔnce drink two bottles of champagne in his room and with each glass toast some mysterious damsels and argue as to who was to get *le fond de la bouteille*.[1] However, he dines regularly at home and after dinner, as of old, makes himself comfortable in the sitting room, engaged in endless, mysterious conversations with Katenka; but from what I can gather, as one who does not participate in their conversations, they speak only of the men and women of the novels they have read, of jealousy, of love; and I cannot understand what they find of interest in such conversations nor why they smile so archly and argue so heatedly.

In general, I notice that besides the understandable friendship of childhood friends there exist between Katenka and Volodya some strange ties that set them apart from us and mysteriously bind them together.

Chapter 21

KATENKA AND LYUBOCHKA

Katenka is sixteen; she is grown up; the angularity of figure, the shyness and the awkwardness of movement typical of an adolescent girl have given way to the harmonious freshness and grace of a budding flower; but she

[1] The dregs.

has not changed. She has the same light-blue eyes and smiling look, the same straight little nose almost in line with her forehead, the same small mouth with a sweet smile, the same tiny dimples in her clear, rosy cheeks, the same small white hands ... and, as before, for some reason the description *clean* little girl still suits her remarkably well. All that is new about her is a heavy, honey-colored braid which she wears like a grown-up and a young bosom, the appearance of which obviously pleases and embarrasses her.

Although Lyubochka has grown up and has been educated with her she is in every respect a very different sort of girl.

Lyubochka is not tall and as a result of rickets she is still bowlegged and has a terrible waist. The only good point she has are her eyes, and these eyes are truly beautiful: they are large, dark and with such an irresistibly lovely expression of dignity and naïveté that they cannot fail to arrest one's attention. Lyubochka is unaffected and natural in everything; Katenka, however, seems to be trying to resemble someone else. Lyubochka always looks straight at you and, at times, fixing her large dark eyes on someone, does not take them away for so long that she is scolded for this and told it is impolite; Katenka, on the other hand, lowers her lashes, squints and insists that she is nearsighted, though I know for certain that she has perfect eyesight. Lyubochka does not like to be conspicuous in the presence of strangers and if anyone kisses her when there are visitors she pouts and says she cannot bear *sentimentality*; Katenka, on the other hand, always becomes particularly affectionate towards Mimi in company and likes to walk up and down the ballroom with her arm around some other girl's waist. Lyubochka loves to laugh and sometimes in a fit of giggling waves her hands and runs about the room; Katenka, on the contrary, covers her mouth with her handkerchief or hand when she begins to laugh. Lyubochka always sits up straight and walks with her hands at her sides. Katenka tilts her head a bit to a side and walks with her hands clasped. Lyubochka is always terribly pleased when she has a chance to converse with a grown-up man and says she will definitely marry

a hussar; Katenka, however, says that she finds all men horrid, that she will never marry and changes visibly, as though she were afraid of something, when a man speaks to her. Lyubochka is always indignant at Mimi for having to be laced up in tight stays so that "one can't breathe" and loves to eat; Katenka, on the contrary, often thrusting a finger under the tip of her bodice shows us how loose it is and eats very daintily. Lyubochka likes to draw portraits; Katenka, however, draws only flowers and butterflies. Lyubochka plays Field's concertos very nicely and some of Beethoven's sonatas; Katenka plays variations and waltzes, not keeping time, thumping on the keys, using the pedal continually and, before beginning to play a piece, strikes three chords in *arpeggio* with great feeling.

But Katenka, according to my opinion at the time, resembles a grown-up more and, therefore, I like her best.

Chapter 22

PAPA

Papa has been in particular good spirits since Volodya entered the University and comes more often than usual to Grandmother's to dine. However, the reason for his good cheer, as I learned from Nikolai, is that of late he has won a great deal at cards. Sometimes even in the evening before going to his club he drops in to see us, sits down at the piano, gathers us around him and beating time with his soft boot (he hates heels and never wears them) sings Gypsy songs. One should see the comical rapture of his pet, Lyubochka, who in turn adores him. Sometimes he comes to the schoolroom and listens with a grave face to me reciting my lesson, but judging by some few words which he uses to correct me I perceive that he does not know much of what I am being taught. Sometimes he winks and makes signs to us stealthily when Grandmother begins to grumble and is cross at everyone for no good reason. "Well, *we* did catch it, children," he

says afterwards. On the whole, he is gradually descending in my estimation from that inaccessible pinnacle on which my childish imagination had always placed him. Yet, with the same sincere love and respect I kiss his large white hand but now I allow myself to examine his actions, to pass judgement on him, and thoughts about him, the very presence of which frighten me, unwittingly enter my mind. I shall never forget an incident which suggested many such thoughts and caused me much mental anguish.

Late one evening, dressed in a black dress-coat and white waistcoat, he entered the drawing room to take Volodya, who was then in his room, dressing, to a ball. Grandmother was waiting in her bedroom for Volodya to come and stand inspection (she was in the habit of calling him in before each ball to bestow her blessing on him, look him over and instruct him). In the ballroom, lit only by a single lamp, Mimi and Katenka were walking up and down and Lyubochka was at the piano, practicing Field's Second Concerto, Mamma's favorite piece.

Never in anyone else have I seen such a striking family resemblance as that between my sister and my mother. This resemblance was neither in her features nor her figure but in something intangible: in her hands, her manner of walking and especially in the tone of her voice and in certain expressions. When Lyubochka was cross and said: "they won't let me go for ages", she pronounced the words *for ages*, which Mamma had also been in the habit of using, in such a way and somehow drawn-out that it seemed I was hearing Mamma: for a-a-ages; but the likeness was most striking in the way she played the piano and in all her motions as she did so: she arranged her skirt in the same way, she turned the pages from the top with her left hand in the same way, she pounded the keys with her fist in vexation when she could not master a difficult passage in the same way and cried: "Oh, my Lord!", and there was the same intangible delicacy and precision in her playing, that wondrous Field school of playing, so aptly called *jeu perlé*, the charm of which not all the hocus-pocus of the most modern pianists can make us forget.

Papa entered the room with small, rapid steps and went up to Lyubochka, who stopped playing at the sight of him.

"Do continue, Lyuba, do continue," he said, seating her. "You know how I love to hear you play..."

Lyubochka went on playing and Papa, resting his head on his hand, sat opposite her for a long while; then, with a quick jerk of his shoulder he rose and began pacing up and down. On reaching the piano he would stop each time and gaze intently at Lyubochka. I could see by his movements and the way he walked that he was agitated. After crossing the ballroom several times he stopped behind Lyubochka's chair, kissed her dark hair and then, turning quickly, resumed his pacing. When, having finished the piece, Lyubochka went up to him to ask: "Did you like it?" he silently took her head between his hands and began kissing her forehead and eyes with such tenderness as I had never before seen him display.

"Gracious heavens! You're crying!" Lyubochka said suddenly, letting go of his watch chain and fixing her large, puzzled eyes on his face. "Forgive me, darling Papa, I had quite forgotten that it was *Mamma's piece.*"

"No, my dear, play it more often," said he in a voice trembling with emotion. "If you only knew what a comfort it is for me to weep with you..."

He kissed her again and endeavoring to master his agitation and jerking his shoulder went out of the door that led through a corridor to Volodya's room.

"Woldemar! Are you coming?" he shouted, stopping in the middle of the corridor. Just then Masha, the maid, was passing and upon seeing her master lowered her eyes and was about to go around him. He stopped her.

"Ah, you keep growing prettier," he said, bending towards her.

Masha blushed and lowered her head still more.

"Allow me..." she whispered.

"Well, are you coming, Woldemar?" Papa repeated, jerking his shoulder and clearing his throat when Masha had slipped past and he caught sight of me...

I love my father, but a person's mind exists indepen-

dently of his heart and often harbors thoughts that insult his feelings and that seem puzzling and cruel to him. And such thoughts, though I try to banish them, occur to me ...

Chapter 23

GRANDMOTHER

With each passing day Grandmother grows weaker; her bell. Gasha's grumbling voice and the opening and closing of doors are to be heard ever more frequently in her rooms and she no longer receives us in the wing chair in her sitting room but in her bedroom, in a high bed with lace-edged pillows. In greeting her I notice a pale-yellow, shiny swelling on her hand and in the room an oppressive odor which, five years before, I had noticed in my mother's room. The doctor visits her three times a day and there have been several consultations. But her character, her proud and ceremonious manner towards everyone in the house and especially towards Papa have not changed at all; as always, she drawls her words, raises her brows and says: "my dear".

For several days now we have not been permitted to see her and one morning during a lesson St.-Jérôme suggests that I go for a drive with Lyubochka and Katenka.

Although as I get into the sleigh I notice that the street outside Grandmother's windows has been strewn with straw and that some men in blue coats are standing about near our gate I simply cannot understand why we are being sent out sleigh-riding at such an unusual hour. All during our drive Lyubochka and I are caught up in that particular state of high spirits in which every trifle, every word, every movement, makes us laugh.

A vendor, clutching his tray, scampers across the street, and we laugh. A tattered cabbie, slapping the reins, gallops after our sleigh, and we laugh. Philip's whip catches on one of the runners; turning around, he says: "Eh-heh," and we die of laughter. Mimi, looking cross,

remarks that only *silly people* laugh for no good reason and Lyubochka, all red in the face from the strain of suppressed mirth, casts a sidelong glance at me. Our eyes meet and we explode with laughter so that tears fill our eyes and we are unable to restrain the peals that nearly choke us. No sooner do we calm down a bit than I glance at Lyubochka and utter a private catchword much in favor among us of late and always sure to cause laughter, and we are off again.

Driving up to the house, I have just opened my mouth to grimace monstrously at Lyubochka when my eyes are startled by a black coffin-lid leaning against one panel of our front door and my mouth remains fixed in its distorted state.

"*Votre grand-mère est morte*!" [1] says St.-Jérôme, his face pale, as he comes out to meet us.

For as long as Grandmother's body remains in the house I experience an oppressive fear of death; that is, the dead body reminds me vividly and unpleasantly of the fact that I, too, must die some day, a feeling that for some reason is usually confused with sorrow. I do not grieve for Grandmother and doubt whether anyone sincerely grieves for her. Although the house is full of mourning callers, no one grieves over her death except one person whose vehement grief astonishes me beyond words. And this person is Gasha, the maid. She goes up to the attic, locks herself in, weeps incessantly, berates herself, tears her hair, is deaf to all remonstrance and says that death can be her only consolation after the loss of her beloved mistress.

Again I repeat that incongruity in the matter of emotions is the surest sign of sincerity.

Grandmother is no more, but there live on in our house memories of her and various rumors. These rumors, for the most, are related to the will she made before her death, the contents of which are known to no one but her executor, Prince Ivan Ivanovich. I notice a certain excitement among Grandmother's serfs, often hear talk of which of them has been left to whom and, I confess,

[1] Your grandmother is dead.

I cannot help being glad that we are to receive an inheritance.

On the passing of six weeks Nikolai, the dispenser of our household news, tells me that Grandmother has left her entire estate to Lyubochka, having appointed as her guardian until she is married not Papa, but Prince Ivan Ivanovich.

Chapter 24

MYSELF

But a few months now remain until I am to enter the University. I am a diligent pupil. Not only do I await my tutors without dread, I even find a certain pleasure in my lessons.

I am happy to be able to recite clearly and distinctly the lesson I have learned. I am preparing to enter the faculty of mathematics and this choice, to tell the truth, has been made solely because the words: sines, tangents, differentials, integrals, etc., please me immensely.

I am much shorter than Volodya, broad-shouldered and muscular, still unattractive and still tormented by this. I try to appear original. One thing consoles me: it is that Papa once said that I had a *clever mug*, and I quite believe this.

St.-Jérôme is pleased with me and praises me; I no longer hate him, and when he sometimes says that *with my abilities* and *with my mind* it is a shame not to do such-and-such, I even think that I like him.

My observation of the maids' room has ended long ago, for I am ashamed to hide behind doors and, besides, the conviction that Masha loves Vasily, I confess, has somewhat cooled my ardor. I am finally cured of this unfortunate passion by Vasily's marriage, for which, at his request, I obtain Papa's consent.

When the *bride and groom*, carrying a tray of bonbons, come to Papa to thank him, and Masha, wearing a cap with blue ribbons, also thanks us all for something or

other, kissing each of us on the shoulder, I am only conscious of the rose-scented pomatum on her hair but not of the slightest emotion.

On the whole, I am beginning gradually to be cured of my adolescent faults with the exception, however, of the principal one, which is fated yet to do me much harm in my life: a tendency to philosophize.

Chapter 25

VOLODYA'S FRIENDS

Although in the company of Volodya's friends I played a role that humiliated my pride, I liked to sit in his room when he had visitors and silently observe all that went on there. Adjutant Dubkov and Prince Nekhlyudov, a student, visited Volodya more often than anyone else. Dubkov was a short, sinewy, dark-haired man past the first flush of youth and somewhat short-legged, but not bad looking and always in good humor. He was one of those limited persons who are especially pleasing in their limitations, who are incapable of seeing things from various angles and who are always being carried away. The judgements of such people are often one-sided and erroneous but always sincere and interesting. Even their narrow egotism seems somehow excusable and charming. Besides, Dubkov had for Volodya and me a two-fold attraction: his military appearance and, chiefly, his age, which young men for some reason are apt to confuse with the concept of propriety (*le comme il faut*), so highly esteemed in youth. In fact, Dubkov was indeed a man who is known as "*un homme comme il faut*". One thing that pained me was that in his presence Volodya seemed embarrassed by my most innocent actions, but chiefly by my youth.

Nekhlyudov was not good-looking: his small gray eyes, low, straight forehead and disproportionately long arms and legs could not be called attractive features. His only good points were his remarkable height, a delicate complexion and excellent teeth. But his face acquired such an

original and energetic expression from his narrow, sparkling eyes and volatile smile, now severe, now childishly enigmatic, that one could not help noticing it.

He seemed very bashful, for every trifle made him blush furiously, but his shyness was not like my own. The more he blushed the more determined his face became. It was as though he were annoyed at himself for his own weakness.

Though he appeared to be very friendly with Dubkov and Volodya it was evident that chance alone had brought them together. Their inclinations were quite dissimilar: Volodya and Dubkov shied away from anything that resembled serious discussion or sentimentality; Nekhlyudov, on the contrary, was an enthusiast in the highest degree and often, in spite of their ridicule, would embark on a discussion of philosophic matters and of sentiment. Volodya and Dubkov liked to speak of the objects of their affections (and were sometimes suddenly in love with several ladies at a time and both of them with the same ones); Nekhlyudov, on the contrary, was always very angry when they alluded to his love for some *redhead.*

Volodya and Dubkov often allowed themselves to make affectionate fun of their relations; Nekhlyudov, on the contrary, could be brought to a rage if one even intimated anything disparaging about his aunt, for whom he had something akin to ecstatic adoration. After supper Volodya and Dubkov would drive off somewhere without Nekhlyudov and would call him an *innocent babe* ...

Prince Nekhlyudov impressed me from the very first both by his conversation and by his appearance. But though in his opinions I found much in accord with my own, or perhaps for that very reason, the feeling he inspired in me when I first saw him was far from friendly.

I did not like his quick glance, his firm voice, his proud bearing, nor, above all, the complete indifference which he accorded me. Often during a conversation I wished terribly to contradict him; as punishment for his pride I wished to get the better of him in an argument, to prove to him that I was clever though he did not deign to notice me.

My shyness restrained me.

Chapter 26

A DISCUSSION

Volodya, stretched out on the sofa, cheek on hand, was reading a French novel when after my evening lessons I entered his room, as was my wont. He raised his head for a moment to glance at me and resumed his reading, a movement most simple and natural but one which made me blush. It seemed to me that his glance expressed a question: why had I come, and the quick lowering of his head a desire to conceal from me the meaning of this glance. This inclination to attribute a meaning to the simplest movement was characteristic of me at that age. I went to the table and also chose a book, but before I began reading it occurred to me that it was somehow absurd that we, not having seen each other all day, should say nothing to each other.

"Will you be at home this evening?"

"I don't know. Why?"

"Oh, nothing," I said and, seeing that the conversation flagged, I picked up the book and began to read.

How odd that when we were alone together Volodya and I would spend hours on end in silence but that the presence of even a silent third person was enough to give rise to the most interesting and varied conversations between us. We felt that we knew each other too well. And knowing each other either too well or too little interferes equally with intimacy.

"Is Volodya at home?" we heard Dubkov's voice in the hall.

"He is," Volodya said, putting his feet down and laying his book on the table.

Dubkov and Nekhlyudov came in. Both wore greatcoats and hats.

"Well, are you coming to the theater with us, Volodya?"

"No, I've no time to," Volodya replied, turning red.

"Oh, indeed! Do come."

"And besides, I have no ticket."

"There are plenty of tickets to be had at the door."

"Wait, I'll be back in a minute," Volodya replied evasively and, jerking his shoulder, left the room.

I knew that Volodya wished very much to go to the theater, as Dubkov had suggested, that he had refused simply because he had no money and that he had gone to borrow five rubles from the butler until his next allowance.

"Hello, *Diplomat*," Dubkov said, proffering his hand.

Volodya's friends called me *Diplomat* because once after dinner at Grandmother's she had, when speaking of our future, said in their presence that Volodya would be an officer and that she hoped to see me become a *diplomat* in a black dress-coat with my hair done *à-la-coq* which, in her opinion, were essential requirements of the diplomatic service.

"Where has Volodya gone?" Nekhlyudov asked me.

"I don't know," I replied, blushing at the thought that they had probably guessed why Volodya had left the room.

"He probably has no money! Right? Ah, you *diplomat*!" he added, interpreting my smile as an affirmative. "I have no money, either. Have you any, Dubkov?"

"Let's see," said Dubkov, taking out his purse and carefully feeling the several small coins in it with his short fingers. "Here's five kopecks, here's twenty and the rest is whe-e-ee!" he said, gesturing comically.

Just then Volodya entered the room.

"Well, are we going?"

"No."

"What an odd fellow you are!" said Nekhlyudov. "Why don't you say you have no money? Take my ticket if you wish."

"But what about you?"

"He'll join his cousins in their box," said Dubkov.

"No, I shan't go at all."

"Why not?"

"Because you know I don't like to sit in a box."

"Why not?"

"I don't like to. I feel ill at ease."

"It's the same old story! I don't understand why you should be ill at ease if everyone is happy to see you. It's

ridiculous, *mon cher.*"

"What's to be done *si je suis timide*?[1] I am positive that you have never blushed in your life, but I do, all the time, at the merest trifle!" he said, blushing as he spoke.

"*Savez-vous d'où vient votre timidité?... D'un excès d'amour-propre, mon cher*,"[2] said Dubkov condescendingly.

"*Excès d'amour-propre*, indeed!" said Nekhlyudov, cut to the quick. "On the contrary, I am shy because I have too little *amour-propre*; I keep thinking, on the contrary, that people find me disagreeable and dull ... that is why..."

"Go and change, Volodya," said Dubkov, taking him by the shoulders and pulling off his coat. "Ignat, get your master ready!"

"That is why it happens to me so often..." Nekhlyudov continued.

But Dubkov was no longer listening to him. "Tra-la-la, ta-ra-ra-la-la," he began to sing a tune.

"You haven't heard the end of it," said Nekhlyudov. "I'll prove to you that shyness is not at all caused by self-love."

"You'll prove it if you come along with us."

"I said I would not."

"Well, then, stay here and prove it to the *diplomat*, and when we return he shall tell us all about it."

"And I will prove it," Nekhlyudov rejoined with childish obstinacy. "Just be sure you come back soon."

"Do you think I am vain?" he said, sitting down beside me.

Though I had formed an opinion on this point I was so taken aback by this unexpected question that it was some time before I could reply.

"I think you are," I said, feeling my voice tremble and the color rising to my face at the thought that the time had come to prove to him that I was *clever*. "I think that everyone is vain and that all one does is done from a sense of vanity."

[1] If I am shy.

[2] Do you know where your shyness comes from? From an excess of self-love, my dear fellow.

"What, then, in your opinion is vanity?" said Nekhlyudov, smiling somewhat contemptuously, as it seemed to me.

"Vanity," I said, "is the conviction that I am better and cleverer than anyone else."

"But how can everyone be convinced of this?"

"Well, I don't know whether it is correct or not, yet no one but me will admit it; I am convinced that I am cleverer than anyone else in the world and I am positive that you, too, are positive that you are."

"No. I, for one, must say that I have met people whom I acknowledged to be cleverer than myself," said Nekhlyudov.

"That's impossible," I replied with conviction.

"Do you actually believe that?" said Nekhlyudov, looking at me closely.

"Quite seriously," I replied.

And then I was suddenly struck by a thought which I immediately proceeded to expound.

"I will prove it to you. Why do we love ourselves more than others? Because we consider ourselves to be better than others and more worthy of being loved. If we thought others better than ourselves we should love them more than we love ourselves, but this never happens. And even if it does, I am right all the same," I added with an involuntary smile of self-satisfaction.

Nekhlyudov was silent for a moment.

"Well, I never imagined you were that clever!" he said to me with such a good-natured, amiable smile that it suddenly seemed to me I was extremely happy.

Praise acts so powerfully on the emotions and on a person's mind as well that under its pleasant influence I imagined I had become much cleverer, and ideas, one after another, filled my head with unusual rapidity. From speaking of vanity we passed on imperceptibly to love, a subject which was apparently inexhaustible. Though our discussions might have sounded like so much nonsense to an outsider, so obscure and one-sided were they, they held a deep significance for us. Our souls were so well attuned that the slightest touch on any one string in one of us evoked a response in the other. We found pleasure in this

very concordance of the sounding of various strings which we touched on in the course of our conversation. We felt that there were not words or time enough to express to one another all those ideas that clamored for utterance.

Chapter 27

THE BEGINNING OF FRIENDSHIP

From that day on rather odd, yet extremely pleasant relations were established between Dmitry Nekhlyudov and myself. In the presence of others he paid scarcely any attention to me, but as soon as we found ourselves alone we settled down in a cozy corner and began discussing things, forgetting all else and oblivious of the passage of time. We discussed our future life, the arts, government service, marriage and the upbringing of children, and it never occurred to us that everything we said was absolutely absurd. This did not occur to us because the nonsense we spoke was clever, charming nonsense; and in youth we still value intellect and believe in it. In youth all one's powers are directed towards the future, and this future takes on such a variety of vivid and enchanting forms under the influence of hope based not on past experience but on the imagined possibility of happiness to come that just sharing one's dreams of future bliss with one who understands is enough to constitute true happiness at this age. In our metaphysical discussion, which formed the principal content of our conversations, I loved the moment when one's thoughts, following one another ever more rapidly and becoming ever more abstract at last reached such a degree of vagueness that one saw no possibility of expressing them, and intending to expound on that which one was thinking one ended by saying something entirely different. I loved the moment when, soaring ever higher in the realm of thought, one suddenly became conscious of its immensity and recognized the impossibility of proceeding.

Once, during Shrovetide, Nekhlyudov was so occupied

with the various amusements of the season that though he would drop in to see us several times in the course of a day he never once addressed a word to me, and this so insulted me that he again seemed to me to be haughty and disagreeable. I was only waiting for a chance to show him that I did not set any value on his society and had no particular affection for him.

The first time after Shrovetide that he again wished to have a talk with me I said that I had to prepare my lessons and went upstairs; but a quarter of an hour later someone opened the schoolroom door and Nekhlyudov entered.

"Will I be disturbing you?" he said.

"No," I replied, though I wanted to say that I really did have something to attend to.

"Then why did you leave Volodya's room? We haven't had a talk in a long while. And I have become so accustomed to it that I feel as though something were missing."

My annoyance vanished in an instant and Dmitry again appeared to me the same good-natured and dear fellow as before.

"I suppose you know why I left?" I said.

"Perhaps," he replied, sitting down beside me, "but even if I have guessed I cannot tell you, though you can," he said.

"And I will. I left because I was angry at you ... not angry, but annoyed. To put it simply, I am always afraid that you despise me for being so young."

"Do you know why we have become friends?" he said, answering my confession with a wise, good-humored look. "Why I am more fond of you than of people whom I have known longer and with whom I have more in common? I have just discovered it. You possess a rare and wonderful quality: frankness."

"True, I always say the very things I am most ashamed to confess," I agreed, "but only to those whom I trust."

"Yes, but to trust a person one must be true friends, and we are not friends yet, *Nicolas*; remember, we spoke of friendship: to be true friends each must be sure of the other."

"Be sure that the things I tell you you will never repeat

to anyone else," I said. "But one's most important and interesting thoughts are just those which we would never confide to each other."

"And what vile thoughts! Thoughts so base that if we knew we should have to confess them they would never dare enter our heads. Do you know what has just occurred to me, *Nicolas*?" he added, rising from his chair, smiling and rubbing his hands. "*Let's do just that*, and you will see how beneficial it will be for both of us: let us promise to confess everything to one another. We shall know one another and not be ashamed; and so as not to be afraid of outsiders, let us promise *never* to say *anything* about each other to *anyone*. Let's do this."

"Let's," I said.

And we really *did this*. I will later recount what came of it.

Karr has said that there are two sides to every attachment: one loves, the other lets himself be loved; one kisses, the other offers his cheek. This is perfectly true; and in our friendship I did the kissing, while Dmitry presented his cheek, though he, too, was ready to pay me a similar salute. We were equally fond of each other because we knew and appreciated each other, but this did not prevent him from exerting an influence on me and me from submitting to him.

It goes without saying that under Nekhlyudov's influence I unwittingly adopted his outlook, the essence of which was an enthusiastic adoration of the ideal of virtue and a conviction that man's purpose in life is to continually perfect himself. At the time it seemed quite feasible to reform all of mankind, to wipe out all the vices and miseries of humanity and it seemed very simple and easy to improve oneself, to acquire every virtue and to be happy...

And yet, God alone knows whether these lofty aspirations of youth were indeed ridiculous and who was to blame if they were not realized...

YOUTH

Chapter 1

WHAT I CONSIDER TO HAVE BEEN THE BEGINNING OF YOUTH

I have said that my friendship with Dmitry opened up to me a new view of life, its aims and its relations. The essence of this view lay in the conviction that a person's designation is a striving towards moral perfection, and that such perfection is easily attainable, possible and lasting. But as yet, I had only found pleasure in the discovery of new ideas that evolved from this conviction and in forming brilliant plans for an active and moral future; meanwhile, my life continued in the same trivial, confused and indolent way.

The virtuous ideas which my admired friend Dmitry (*wonderful Mitya*, as I sometimes called him to myself in a whisper) and I discussed in our conversations appealed to my reasoning and not my feelings. But the time came when these ideas occurred to me with so fresh a force of moral revelation that I became frightened at the thought of the amount of time I had wasted and wished at once, at that very moment, to apply these new ideas to life, with the firm intention of never being false to them.

It is from this time that I date the beginning of my *youth*.

I was then nearly sixteen. My tutors continued to come to the house. St.-Jérôme supervised my studies, and unwillingly and reluc-

tantly I prepared for the University. Apart from my studies, my occupations consisted in: solitary, incoherent daydreaming and contemplation, in gymnastic exercises with a view to becoming the strongest man in the world, in wandering without definite purpose or thought through all the rooms of the house, and particularly along the passage outside the maids' room, and in scrutinizing myself in the looking glass from which, however, I always turned away with a sad feeling of despondency and even disgust. My appearance, as I was becoming convinced, far from being attractive, even prevented me from consoling myself with the consolations usual in such cases. I could not say that I had an expressive, a clever or a distinguished face. There was nothing expressive in it, nothing but the most ordinary, coarse and ugly features; my small gray eyes, particularly when I looked at myself in the glass, were stupid rather than clever. There was even less that was manly: though I was tall and very strong for my age, all the features of my face were mild, inert and ill-defined. There was not even anything distinguished about them; on the contrary, my face was as common as that of an ordinary peasant, with hands and feet as large, which at the time seemed very shameful to me.

Chapter 2

SPRING

The year I entered the University, Easter came rather late in April, so that the examinations were fixed for the week after Easter, and all of Holy Week I had both to fast and to complete my studies for the examinations.

The weather, after a fall of sleet which I remember Karl Ivanych used to call "*the son has come after the father*", had for three days been calm, warm and bright. There was not a patch of snow left on the streets, and the dirty slush had given way to wet, glistening paving stones and swift-running rivulets. In the sun the last drops were fall-

ing from the roofs, buds were swelling on the trees in the front garden, there was a dry path in the yard leading to the stable past a frozen heap of manure, and mossy grass showed green between the stones by the porch. It was that particular time in the spring that most forcefully affects the human soul: the bright, ever-glittering, but not yet hot sun, rivulets and patches of thawed earth, a fragrant freshness in the air, and a delicate blue sky streaked with long, transparent clouds. I do not know why, but it seems to me that in a big city the effect of this first period of the new-born spring is more perceptible and impressive on the soul, for one does not so much see, as one senses. I stood by the window into which, through the double panes, the morning sun cast dusty rays upon the floor of the schoolroom, of which I was thoroughly sick, and attempted to solve some long algebraical problem on the blackboard. In one hand I held a limp, tattered copy of Franker's *Algebra*, and in the other a small piece of chalk with which I had already soiled both hands, my face and the elbows of my frock-coat. Nikolai, wearing an apron and with his sleeves rolled up, was knocking the putty off the window frame with a pair of pliers and bending back the nails on the window that opened out into the front garden. His occupation and the noise he made distracted my attention. Besides, I was in an ugly, discontented state of mind. Nothing seemed to be going right: I had made a mistake at the beginning of my calculation, so that I had to start all over again; I had twice dropped the chalk, I was conscious of my face and hands being soiled, the sponge had vanished, and Nikolai's knocking rattled my nerves rather painfully. I felt like venting my wrath on someone, flung down the chalk and my *Algebra*, and began pacing up and down the room. Then I recalled that it was Ash Wednesday, that we had to go to confession, and that I must refrain from doing anything that was wrong; and suddenly a peculiar gentleness came over me, and I went up to Nikolai.

"Let me help you, Nikolai," I said, trying to speak as amicably as I could, and the thought that I was acting well by repressing my annoyance and offering to help him increased my meekness even more.

The putty was knocked off, the nails bent back, but though Nikolai tugged at the crosspiece with all his might, the frame would not yield.

"If the frame comes out at once now, when I pull with him," I said to myself, "it will mean it would be sinful to study any more today." The frame gave way on one side and came out.

"Where shall I take it?" I asked.

"Let me see to it m'self, sir," Nikolai replied, plainly surprised and obviously displeased at my zeal. "Don't want to get 'em mixed up, 'cause I've got 'em all numbered up there in the storeroom."

"I shall mark it," I said, lifting the frame.

I believe that had the storeroom been two miles away and the frame twice as heavy I should have been very pleased. I wanted to exhaust myself doing Nikolai this favor.

When I returned to the room the little bricks and pyramids of salt[1] had already been removed from the sill and Nikolai, using a feather duster, was brushing sand and sleepy flies out through the open window. Fresh, fragrant air had already filled the room. Through the window the din of the city was heard and the sparrows' chirping in the front garden.

Every object was brightly illumined, the room had become cheerful, and a light spring breeze riffled the leaves of my *Algebra* and the hair on Nikolai's head. I went to the window, sat down on the sill, leaned out into the garden and became lost in thought.

An extremely keen and pleasant feeling, quite new to me, suddenly invaded my soul. The wet ground with bright-green spikes of grass on tiny yellow stalks pushing up here and there, the rivulets sparkling in the sun and bearing along whirling clods of earth and chips of wood, the reddening twigs of lilac with swollen buds nodding just below the window, the busy twitter of small birds bustling about in this bush, the dark fence wet from the melting snow and, above all, this fragrant, moist air and joyous sunshine spoke to me clearly and strongly of some-

[1] Salt, sand and other substances were placed between the double frames in winter to absorb moisture.– *Tr.*

thing new and wonderful which, though I cannot render it as it was revealed to me, I shall try to relate as I conceived it: everything spoke to me of beauty, happiness and virtue, saying that one was as easily attainable and simple as the other, that the one could not exist without the other and even that beauty, happiness and virtue were one and the same thing. "How could I have failed to understand this? How wicked I have been, how good and happy I might have been and I may still be in the future!" I said to myself. "I must quickly, very quickly, this very instant, become a different person and begin to live differently."

Yet, for all that, I remained there on the windowsill for quite some time, daydreaming and idling. Have you ever in the summer lain down and fallen asleep in the daytime on a rainy, overcast day and, on awakening at sunset, opened your eyes to see in the broadening rectangle of the window from under the linen curtain which, billowing, whipped against the sill, the shady, purplish side of a linden alley wet with rain, and a damp garden path lit by the bright, slanting rays of the sun, and suddenly heard the merry sounds of birds in the garden, and seen the insects which swarmed in the open window, transluscent in the sunshine, smelled the fragrance of the air after the rain, and thought: "I should be ashamed to have slept through such an afternoon", and hastily jumped up to go out into the garden and rejoice in life. If you have, then you can imagine the overpowering sensation I experienced at this time.

Chapter 3

DAYDREAMS

"Today I will make my confession, be cleansed of all my sins," I was thinking, "and never again will I ..." (Here I recalled all the sins that most tormented me.) "I will go to church every Sunday without fail and afterwards read the Gospels for an hour; then, out of the

twenty-five rubles I am to receive every month after I enter the University I will without fail give two-and-a-half rubles (a tithe) to the poor, and in such a way that no one will know of it, and not to beggars, but I will search for some poor people, an orphan or an old woman, whom no one knows about.

"I shall have a room of my own (probably St.-Jérôme's), and I will tidy it myself and keep it wonderfully clean; I will never make a servant do anything for me. After all, he is a human being like myself. Then I will walk to the University every day (and if I am given a droshky I will sell it and will also put that money aside for the poor), and I will carry out everything precisely (what that 'everything' was I could not for the life of me have said at the time, but I clearly understood and felt this 'everything' to mean a sensible, moral and irreproachable life). I will take down the lectures and will even prepare the subjects in advance, so that I shall be first in my first year and will write a dissertation; in my second year I shall know everything in advance and may pass directly to the third year, so that at eighteen I shall graduate as first Candidate with two gold medals; then, I will take my Master's and my Doctor's degrees and become the leading scholar of Russia... I may even become the leading scholar of Europe... Well, and then?" I asked myself, but I suddenly remembered that these daydreams indicated pride, a sin I should that very evening have to confess to my confessor, and so I returned to the beginning of my reflections. "To prepare for my classes, I will walk to the Vorobyovy Hills; there I will find myself a spot under a tree and will read the lectures over; sometimes I might take something along to eat: some cheese, or a patty from Pedotti's, or something else. I shall rest and then read some good book, or sketch landscapes, or play some instrument (I will definitely learn to play the flute). Then *she*, too, will come walking out to the Vorobyovy Hills, and one day she will come up to me and ask me who I am. I shall look at her rather sadly and say that I am a priest's son, and that I am happy only when I am alone here, absolutely and completely alone. She will give me her hand and say something, and sit down beside me.

Thus, every day, we shall go there and will be friends, and I shall kiss her ... No, that is not right. On the contrary, from this day forth I will no longer look at women. I will never, never again go to the maids' room and will try not even to pass that way; and in three years' time I shall be of age and will marry without fail. I will make a point of taking as much exercise as possible and practicing gymnastics every day, so that by the time I am twenty-five I shall be stronger than Rappeau. On the first day, I shall hold twenty-pound weights out at arm's length for five minutes; the next day, twenty-one-pound weights; the third day, twenty-two pounds, and so on, until at last, I shall be able to hold one hundred and twenty pounds in each hand, and so I will be stronger than any of the menials; and if anyone should suddenly take it into his head to insult me, or speak disrespectfully of *her*, I will take hold of him so, by his shirtfront, lift him about five feet off the ground with one hand and hold him there in the air a bit, to let him feel my strength, and then let him go; but this is not right, either; no, it will not matter, for I shall not do him any harm, but merely show him that I ..."

And may I not be reproached if the daydreams of my youth were as puerile as those of my childhood and adolescence. I am convinced that if I am fated to live to a ripe old age and my story keeps apace with my age, as an old man of seventy I shall still have just as impossibly childish dreams as I do now. I shall dream of some charming Maria who will fall in love with me, a toothless old man, as another Maria once fell in love with Mazepa, and of my feeble-minded son suddenly, by some extraordinary occurrence, becoming a minister of state, or of my suddenly coming into an inheritance of countless millions. I am convinced that there is no human being and no age bereft of this benign, comforting ability to dream. But apart from a feature general to them all–the impossibility, the magic quality of reverie–the dreams of every person and of every period of life have a distinctive character of their own. At that period which I regard as the end of adolescence and the beginning of youth, four feelings lay at the root of my daydreams: a love of *her*, the imaginary

woman of whom I always dreamed in one and the same way and whom I expected at any moment to encounter somewhere. This *she* was a little like Sonichka, a little like Masha, Vasily's wife, when she was washing clothes in a tub, and a little like a woman with a string of pearls around her snow-white neck whom I had seen long ago in the box next to ours at the theater. The second feeling was a love of being loved. I wanted everyone to know and love me. I wanted to say my name aloud: Nikolai Irteniev, and have everyone struck by this information and crowd around me, and thank me for something. The third feeling was a hope of some remarkable, vainglorious good fortune, a hope so strong and unshakable that it bordered on insanity. I was so convinced that very soon, by some extraordinary circumstance, I should suddenly become the wealthiest and most distinguished man in the world that I was continually in a state of anxious expectation of some fantastic good fortune. I kept expecting it *to begin* at any moment, and then I would attain all that a person could wish for, and I was forever in a hurry, imagining that *it* was already *beginning* in some place where I was not. The fourth and most important feeling was self-disgust and repentance, but repentance so completely mingled with hope of happiness that there was nothing sad about it. It seemed to me so simple and natural to break away from all that was in the past, to alter and forget all that had been, and to begin my life with all its relations completely anew in such a way that the past would not weigh heavy on me, would not hamper me. I even revelled in this repugnance of the past and tried to paint it darker than it was. The blacker the circle of my recollections of the past, the fairer and brighter did the pure, radiant point of the present emerge from it and the rainbow hues of the future unfold. This voice of repentance and passionate desire for perfection was the new spiritual sensation at that period of my development, and it was this that inspired my new approach to myself, to other people, and to God's universe. A blessed, joyous voice! How often since then, in those sad times when my soul silently succumbed to the powers of worldly deceit and vice, did it boldly rise up against all falsehood, fiercely

denounce the past, point out and compel me to love the bright spot of the present and promise well-being and happiness in the future – O blessed, joyous voice! Can it be that you will some day cease to sound?

Chapter 4

OUR FAMILY CIRCLE

Papa was seldom at home that spring. But then, when it did chance to happen, he was always exceedingly cheerful, tinkling his favorite airs on the piano, casting mischievous glances at us and making up jokes about Mimi and all of us, such as that the Crown Prince of Georgia had seen Mimi out driving and had become so enamored of her that he had petitioned the Synod for a divorce, or that I had been appointed secretary to the Ambassador in Vienna, and he announced these bits of news to us with a serious mien; he would tease Katenka with spiders, of which she was terrified; he was very gracious to our friends Dubkov and Nekhlyudov, and was forever informing us and our visitors of his plans for the coming year. Though these plans changed almost from day to day and contradicted one another, they were so fascinating that we were carried away by them, and Lyubochka would gaze wide-eyed at Papa's mouth, lest she miss a single word. One plan was for us to remain in Moscow and attend the University, while he and Lyubochka went to Italy for two years; one was to buy an estate on the South Coast in the Crimea and spend every summer there; one was to move the entire household to St. Petersburg, and so on. However, apart from an unusual cheerfulness, another change had, of late, come over Papa that astounded me. He had had some fashionable clothes made for himself: an olive-green dress-coat, the new style of pantaloons with straps and a long overcoat, which was very becoming to him, and he often smelled wonderfully of scent when he went visiting, and particularly when he visited a certain lady, of whom Mimi never spoke without a sigh and with a face

which plainly said: "Poor orphans! What an unfortunate passion! It is well that *she* is no more", and so on. I learned from Nikolai, since Papa never mentioned his gambling to us, that he had been particularly lucky that winter; he had won enormous sums, had deposited the money in a loan-bank and did not mean to play any more that spring. Evidently that was why, fearful of being unable to keep this resolution, he was so anxious to leave for the country. He had even decided not to wait until I entered the University, but to leave immediately after Easter with the girls for Petrovskoye, where Volodya and I were to join them later.

All that winter and right into the spring Volodya and Dubkov were inseparable. (Volodya and Dmitry, however, had begun to drift coldly apart.) Their chief pleasures, as far as I could gather from the conversations I overheard, consisted in continually drinking champagne, driving in a sleigh past the windows of a young lady with whom, it seemed, they both were in love, and dancing *vis-à-vis*, not at children's parties any more, but at real balls. This last circumstance, though Volodya and I were fond of each other, did much to separate us. We felt that the difference between a boy who was still visited by tutors and a man who danced at grand balls was too great to allow a mutual exchange of confidences. Katenka was quite grown up now and read a great many novels, and the thought that she might soon be married no longer seemed ludicrous to me; but though Volodya, too, was grown up, they were not friends and even, I believe, despised one another. In fact, when Katenka was at home alone, nothing but novel-reading interested her, and she was bored most of the time; when, however, gentlemen came to visit us, she became very lively and charming, and did such strange things with her eyes that I simply could not understand what she was trying to express in this way. Only later, hearing her remark in the course of some conversation that the one form of coquetry permissible to a young lady was the coquetry of glances, could I explain to myself those strange, unnatural grimaces with her eyes which, it seemed, did not surprise others at all. Lyubochka had also begun to wear much longer dresses, so

that her bowlegs were scarcely visible, but she was still the same cry-baby as before. Now she no longer dreamed of marrying a hussar, but a singer or a musician and, to this end, applied herself to music in earnest. St.-Jérôme, knowing that he would stay on with us only until the end of my examinations, had found himself a situation in the family of some count and ever since had regarded our household rather disdainfully. He was seldom at home, had taken to smoking cigarettes, which was then the height of dandyism, and continually whistled lively airs on the edge of a visiting card. Mimi grew more embittered with each passing day, as though now that we were all grown up she no longer expected any good from anyone or anything.

When I came in to dinner, I found only Mimi, Katenka, Lyubochka and St.-Jérôme in the dining room; Papa was not at home, and Volodya was preparing for an examination with his friends in his own room and had ordered dinner to be served to them there. Of late, Mimi, whom none of us respected, usually took the seat at the head of the table, and dinner had lost much of its charm. It was no longer, as in Mamma's or Grandmother's time, a ritual of sorts which, at a certain hour, brought the whole family together and divided the day into halves. We now allowed ourselves to be late, to come in at the second course, to drink wine out of tumblers (with St.-Jérôme himself setting us an example), to sprawl in our chairs, to get up before dinner was over and to take similar liberties. Dinner had ceased to be the daily, happy family occasion it once was. How different it had been in Petrovskoye, when at two o'clock, washed and dressed for dinner, everyone assembled in the drawing room and, chatting merrily, awaited the appointed hour. Just as the clock in the butler's room began to whir preparatory to striking two, Foka, a napkin over his arm and stepping softly, would enter with a dignified and rather austere face. "Dinner is served!" he would announce in loud, measured tones, and everyone, with bright, contented faces, the elders in front, the youngsters behind, starched petticoats rustling and boots and shoes creaking slightly, proceeded to the dining room and, speaking in undertones, took our appointed

places. How different it had been in Moscow, when everyone conversed in low voices as we stood before the table laid in the dining room, waiting for Grandmother, to whom Gavrila had gone to announce that dinner was served. Suddenly, the door would open, we would hear the rustling of her gown, the shuffling of her feet, and Grandmother, in a cap with an unusual lilac bow, smiling or frowning darkly (depending on the state of her health), would sail in sideways from her room. Gavrila would rush to her armchair, the chairs would scrape, and feeling a chill run down my spine, the herald of a good appetite, I would take up my cool, starched napkin, nibble on some bread and, rubbing my hands under the table with impatient avidity, would watch the plates of steaming soup which, according to rank, age and Grandmother's favor, the butler would be serving round.

Now I no longer felt either joy or excitement when I came down to dinner.

The chattering of Mimi, St.-Jérôme and the girls about the dreadful boots the grammar teacher wore, about the flounced dresses the princesses Kornakov fancied, and so on, chatter that had formerly evoked in me a frank contempt that, especially as far as Lyubochka and Katenka were concerned, I had never attempted to conceal, did not disturb my new and virtuous frame of mind. I was gentleness itself; smilingly, I listened to them with particular amicability, politely asked them to pass me the kvass and agreed with St.-Jérôme when he corrected a phrase of mine at dinner, remarking that it was more refined to say *je puis* than *je peux*. I must, however, confess that I was rather disappointed when no one took any particular notice of my meekness and virtue. After dinner Lyubochka showed me a piece of paper on which she had written down all her sins; I found that this was all very well, but remarked that it would be even better if one inscribed all one's sins on one's soul, and that "all this was not what really mattered".

"Why not?" Lyubochka asked.

"Well, this is all right, too; you will not understand me," I said and went upstairs to my room, telling St.-Jérôme that I was going to study, but actually intending

before confession (which was about an hour and a half off) to draw up for myself for the rest of my life a list of duties and occupations, to set down on paper my aim in life and the rules by which I should now always, unfailingly be guided.

Chapter 5

MY RULES

I took out a sheet of paper and wanted to start by drawing up a list of duties and occupations for the coming year. The paper had to be ruled, but as I could not find the ruler, I used my Latin dictionary for the purpose. I drew the pen along the edge of the dictionary and then removed it, discovering that instead of a line I had made an oblong puddle of ink on the paper. Besides, the dictionary was shorter than the paper, and my line had curved around its soft corner. I took another sheet, and by moving the dictionary along succeeded in ruling the paper after a fashion. Having divided my duties into three categories: my duties to myself, to my family and to God, I began to set down the first, but they turned out to be so numerous, of so many categories and subdivisions that I decided I had better compose the "Rules of Life" first and then only set to work on the list. I took six sheets of paper, sewed them together into a notebook and at the top inscribed: "Rules of Life". These words were written so crookedly and unevenly that I debated at length whether to rewrite them and tortured myself for some time, staring at the torn-up list and at the disfigured heading. Why was everything so beautiful and clear in my soul and so hideous when put down on paper–and in life generally, whenever I wished to put something I had thought about into practice?

"The Father-confessor's arrived. Won't you come down, if you please, to hear the precepts," Nikolai came up to announce.

I hid the notebook in the table drawer, looked at myself

in the glass, brushed my hair upwards, which I imagined gave me a pensive air, and went down to the sitting room, where a table covered with a cloth had been prepared, with an icon and lighted wax tapers set upon it. Papa entered at the same time by another door. The confessor, a gray-haired monk with a stern, aged face, gave Papa his blessing. Papa kissed his small, broad, wizened hand; I did the same.

"Call Woldemar," said Papa. "Where is he? No, never mind, he will perform his devotions at the University."

"He is studying with the prince," said Katenka and cast a glance at Lyubochka. Lyubochka suddenly colored for some reason, winced, pretending that something pained her, and left the room. I followed her out. She had stopped in the drawing room and was again writing something down with a little pencil on her piece of paper.

"What? Have you committed another sin?" I asked.

"No, it is nothing," she replied, blushing.

Just then Dmitry's voice was heard in the front hall as he bid Volodya goodbye.

"There, you are being tempted again," said Katenka, entering the room and addressing Lyubochka.

I could not understand what had come over my sister: she was so upset that tears sprang to her eyes, and her embarrassment, becoming extreme, turned into annoyance at herself and at Katenka, who was obviously taunting her.

"Well, one can see you are a *foreigner*." (Nothing offended Katenka more than being called a foreigner, and that was why Lyubochka had used the word.) "At such a solemn moment," she continued pompously, "you deliberately upset me ... you ought to understand ... this is not a joke at all..."

"Do you know what she has written down, Nikolenka?" said Katenka, greatly offended at having been called a foreigner. "She has written ..."

"I never expected you to be so spiteful," said Lyubochka tearfully as she hurried away from us. "At such a moment, and deliberately, she forever leads one into sin. I don't keep on at you about your feelings and sufferings."

Chapter 6

CONFESSION

With these and similar disjointed reflections in my mind, I returned to the sitting room when all had assembled there and the confessor, rising, was about to say the precepts before confession. But as soon as the monk's expressive, stern voice broke the general silence, and particularly when he addressed these words to us: "*Confess all your transgressions without shame, concealment or justification and your soul shall be cleansed before God, but if ye conceal aught ye shall commit a grievous sin*", the feeling of pious trepidation which I had experienced that morning at the thought of the impending sacrament returned to me again. I even took pleasure in recognizing this condition and attempted to retain it by repressing all other thoughts from entering my head and striving to experience a vague sort of fear.

Papa was the first to make his confession. He remained in Grandmother's room for a very long time, and all that while we in the sitting room were silent, or discussed in whispers who was to go in next. At last, through the door we again heard the monk's voice saying a prayer and Papa's footsteps. The door creaked and Papa emerged, clearing his throat, as was his habit, jerking his shoulder and not looking at any of us.

"Well, you go in now, Lyubochka, but be sure to confess everything. I know you're a great sinner," Papa said lightly, pinching her cheek.

Lyubochka turned pale, then blushed, took the little note from her pinafore pocket, put it back again and, bowing her head and somehow drawing in her neck, as though expecting a blow from above, went through the door. She did not remain there long, and when she came out her shoulders heaved from sobs.

At last, after pretty Katenka came back smiling, it was my turn. With the same numb feeling of awe and dread which I deliberately encouraged in myself I entered the dimly lit room. The confessor stood before the reading desk and slowly turned his face towards me.

I spent no more than five minutes in Grandmother's room, but emerged from it happy and, as I was convinced at the time, a completely pure, morally reborn, new person. Though I was disagreeably impressed at finding all the old appurtenances of life: the same rooms, the same furniture, my own unaltered figure (I should have liked all outward things to have undergone a change similar to the one I felt I had undergone inwardly), in spite of all this, I remained in that blissful frame of mind until I went to bed.

I was drifting off, going over in my mind all the sins of which I had been absolved, when I suddenly recalled a shameful sin which I had kept back at confession. The words of the precepts returned to me and rang in my ears. My peace of mind vanished instantly. "But if ye conceal aught ye shall commit a grievous sin ..." The words hammered at me, and I imagined myself to be such a dreadful sinner that no punishment was adequate for me. For a long time I tossed about, reflecting on my condition and expecting at any moment the wrath of God, sudden death even, to strike me, a thought that filled me with indescribable terror. But suddenly a happy thought occurred to me: at daybreak I would walk or drive to the monastery to see the confessor and make a second confession, and I felt relieved.

Chapter 7

THE VISIT TO THE MONASTERY

I woke several times during the night, afraid of oversleeping, and was up before six. Through the windows day was just breaking. I put on my clothes and boots which lay crumpled and unbrushed by my bed, as Nikolai had not yet tidied up, and without saying my prayers or without washing, I went out into the street alone for the first time in my life.

On the opposite side, beyond the green roof of a tall house, a rosy dawn gleamed through the cold mist.

A fairly sharp spring morning frost had made the mud and rivulets hard underfoot and nipped my hands and face. There was not a single cabbie on our lane as yet, though I had counted on one to get me there quickly and back. Only a few carts were moving slowly down Arbat Street, and two stone-masons passed along the sidewalk, talking. Having gone about a thousand paces, I began to encounter people: women with baskets on their way to market, a water-carrier going for water and a pieman, who appeared at the corner; a bakery opened, and at the Arbat Gate I spotted a cabbie, a little old man dozing and swaying on his plain, patched and shabby, bluish droshky. Still probably half-asleep, he asked only twenty kopecks to take me to the monastery and back, but then suddenly came to his senses and, just as I was about to get in, slapped his little horse with the ends of the reins and very nearly drove off. "Must feed m'horse! Can't take you, sir," he mumbled.

With difficulty I persuaded him to stop by offering him forty kopecks. He reined in the horse, sized me up and said: "Get in, sir." I confess, I was rather afraid that he might drive me into some back alley and rob me. Catching hold of the collar of his tattered coat, at which his wrinkled neck above his bent back was rather pitifully exposed, I mounted the lumpy, rickety, light-blue seat and we rattled off down Vozdvizhenka Street. On the way I noticed that the back of the droshky was upholstered with a bit of the same greenish cloth from which the cabbie's coat was made, and this circumstance for some reason reassured me, and I no longer dreaded that he would drive me into a back alley and rob me.

The sun was already quite high and was brightly gilding the church cupolas when we reached the monastery. The ground was still frozen in the shade, but swift, turbid rills coursed all over the road and the horse clopped through the slush. On entering the monastery enclosure, I asked the first person I saw where I might find the Father-confessor.

"That is his cell," said a passing monk, stopping for a moment and pointing out a tiny house with a little porch.

"Thank you very much," I said.

But what might they think of me, the monks who all looked at me as, one by one, they emerged from the church? I was neither a grown-up nor a child; my face was not washed, my hair not brushed, my clothes full of lint, my boots muddy and not blacked. To what class of people would the observant monks mentally assign me? And they did look at me attentively. All the same, I started in the direction the young monk had indicated.

A little old man in black garments and with gray beetle brows whom I met on the narrow path leading to the cells asked me what I was looking for.

For a moment I wanted to say: "Nothing" and run back to the cab and drive home, but in spite of his knitted brows, the old man's face inspired confidence. I said I wished to see the confessor and gave his name.

"Come, *young sir*, I will show you the way," he said, turning back and apparently guessing my errand at once. "Father is at matins. He will be here soon."

He opened the door and led me through a small, neat passage and hall, over a clean linen drugget, into the cell.

"You can wait here," he said to me with a kindly, reassuring look, and left.

The room in which I found myself was very small and exceedingly tidy. The furnishings consisted of a little table covered with an oilcloth and set between two tiny casement windows with two potted geraniums on the sills, a little shelf holding icons and a votive light hanging before them, one armchair and two ordinary chairs. In the corner hung a wall clock with a floral design painted on its face and two brass weights hanging from its chains; on the partition, joined to the ceiling by whitewashed wooden posts (behind which, no doubt, was a bed), two cassocks hung on a nail.

The windows faced a white wall that loomed but two yards away. Between them and the wall grew a small lilac bush. No sound from outside reached the room, so that the measured, pleasant ticking of the pendulum sounded quite loud in the silence. As soon as I was alone in this quiet nook all my former thoughts and recollections

vanished, as though they had never existed, and I sank into a kind of inexpressibly agreeable neverie. The yellowed nankeen cassock with its threadbare lining, the worn black leather bindings and brass clasps of the books, the dull green plants with the carefully-watered earth and well-washed leaves, and particularly the monotonous recurring sound of the pendulum spoke to me distinctly of some new, hitherto unknown life, a life of solitude, prayer and calm, tranquil happiness ...

"Months pass, years pass," I was thinking, "and he is always alone, he is always at peace, knowing that his conscience is clear in the sight of God and that his prayers are heard by Him." I sat on my chair for about half an hour, trying not to move and to breathe softly, lest I disturb the harmony of sounds which bespoke of much to me. And the pendulum continued to tick as before, loudly to the right, softly to the left.

Chapter 8

THE SECOND CONFESSION

The footsteps of the confessor roused me from this reverie.

"How do you do?" he said, passing his hand over his gray hair. "What is it you wish?"

I asked him to give me his blessing and kissed his yellowed hand with particular pleasure.

Upon hearing my request, he said nothing, went up to the icons and began the exhortation.

When, overcoming my shame, I had told him all that was in my heart and the confession was over, he laid his hands upon my head and in his quiet, mellow voice intoned: "May the blessing of our heavenly Father be upon thee, my son, and may He ever preserve thee in faith, meekness and humility. Amen."

I was completely happy; tears of joy choked me; I kissed a fold of his drap-de-dame cassock and raised my head. The monk's face expressed perfect serenity.

Sensing that I was enjoying this feeling of beatitude, and fearful of somehow dispelling it, I hurriedly took leave of the confessor. Looking neither to the left nor to the right, lest I be distracted, I passed through the enclosure and again mounted the swaying, striped droshky. However, the jolts of the vehicle and the motley objects flashing by my eyes soon destroyed this feeling. I was already imagining that the confessor was probably now saying to himself that never before had he met, nor should he ever meet, a young man with so beautiful a soul as mine, for there vere none such. Of this I was convinced, and this conviction produced that kind of exhilaration which demands to be communicated to someone else.

I wished terribly to talk to someone, but since there was no one else at hand except the cabbie, I addressed myself to him.

"Was I gone long?" I asked.

"Long enough, and it's high time I fed m'horse, 'cause I'm a *night* cabman," the little old man replied, having obviously cheered up, now that the sun was shining.

"But it only seemed like a minute to me," I said. "Do you know why I went to the monastery?" I went on, shifting my seat to the hollow which in the droshky was closer to the old cabbie.

"What's it to us? Wherever a fare says to go, that's where we takes 'em," he replied.

"But all the same, what do you think?" I persisted.

"Well, I'd say t'was about burying somebody. You went to buy 'em a plot," he said.

"No, my good man. Do you know why I went?"

"Can't say, sir," he repeated.

The cabbie's voice seemed to me so amicable, that for his edification I decided to tell him the reason for my visit, and even the feeling I had experienced.

"Shall I tell you? You see ..."

And I related it all to him and described all my beautiful emotions. I blush even now at the recollection.

"Yes, sir," the cabbie said doubtfully.

And for a long while after he sat silent and still, except for occasionally tucking in the skirt of his coat that

slipped from under his striped trousers as his leg in its enormous boot bobbed on the step of the droshky. I was beginning to imagine that he must be thinking the same about me as the confessor, namely, that there was not another young man as splendid as I in the whole wide world, when he suddenly turned to me and said:

"Well, sir, a gent'man don't need to account to no one."

"What?" I said.

"I says, you does as you pleases," he repeated, lisping toothlessly.

"No, he has not understood me," I said to myself and did not speak to him again until I reached home.

If not a feeling of beatitude and piety, then the satisfaction of having experienced it stayed with me all during the trip back, in spite of the people who dotted the streets in the bright sunshine, but the moment I got home this feeling vanished completely. I did not have the forty kopecks for the cabbie. Gavrila, the butler, to whom I was already in debt, would not lend me any more. The cabbie, seeing me twice bound back and forth across the courtyard in quest of money, and obviously guessing what I was about, climbed down from the box and, though he had seemed to me so kind, began to speak loudly, with an apparent desire to mortify me, of there being scoundrels around who did not pay their fares.

At home everyone was still asleep, so that there was no one, save the servants, from whom I could borrow the forty kopecks. At last, Vasily, upon my most solemn word of honor, which (I could see by his face) he did not at all trust, but simply because he was fond of me and remembered my kind service, paid the cabbie for me. Thus did this feeling vanish like smoke. When I began to dress for church to join the others in going to communion and found that my suit had not been mended and I could not wear it, I commited a grave sin. Putting on another suit, I went to communion in a strange state of mental flurry and utter distrust of my fine inclinations.

Chapter 9

HOW I PREPARE FOR THE EXAMINATIONS

On Thursday in Easter week Papa, my sister, Mimi and Katenka left for the country, so that only Volodya, myself and St.-Jérôme remained in Grandmother's great house. The frame of mind I had been in on the day of my confession and of my visit to the monastery had disappeared completely, leaving behind only a vague, though pleasant memory which was gradually becoming obscured by the new impressions of my independence.

My notebook entitled "Rules of Life" had been put away with my school exercise books. Though the idea that it was possible to draw up for myself a list of rules for all the contingencies of life and to always guide myself by them pleased me, seemed very simple and yet lofty, and though I intended, nevertheless, to put it into practice, I again seemed to have forgotten that this ought to be done at once and so put it off until some future time. It was a comfort, however, to find that every thought which now came into my head fitted some one of the subdivisions of my rules and duties: either the rules in regard to my family, or to myself, or to God. "Later I shall enter this there together with many, many other thoughts which will occur to me on the subject," I said to myself. I often now ask myself: was I better and more close to the truth then, when I believed in the omnipotence of the human mind, or now, when I have lost the capacity for development and doubt the power and importance of the human mind? And I cannot find a positive reply.

The sense of freedom and that springtime feeling of vague expectation, of which I have already spoken, so unsettled me that I positively could not keep myself in hand and did very poorly in preparing for the examinations. I would be studying in the schoolroom in the morning, knowing that I had to concentrate, because the next day I had an examination in a subject two whole topics of which I had not read up on at all, when suddenly there would waft in through the window some sweet breath of spring. It would seem as though there were something

urgent that I had to remember just then, and my hands would lay down the book of their own accord, my feet would begin to move of their own accord, making me pace up and down the room, while through my head, as though someone had touched a spring and set a machine in motion, all sorts of motley, delightful daydreams would begin to rush so easily, and naturally, and swiftly that I scarcely had time to notice their radiance. Thus, an hour, and two would pass unnoticed. Or else I would be sitting over a book and attempting to somehow concentrate my attention on what I was reading, when suddenly I would hear a woman's step and the rustle of a dress in the passage, and everything would escape my mind. It would be impossible to sit still, though I knew very well that no one save Gasha, Grandmother's elderly maid, could be coming along the passage. "But suppose it is *she*?" the thought would flash across my mind. "Suppose *it* is beginning now, and I will miss it?" And I would dash out into the passage and find that it was indeed Gasha; but still, for a long time after, I would be unable to master my thoughts. The spring had been released, and again it had created terrible confusion. Or I would be sitting alone in my room in the evening by the light of a tallow candle; to trim the candle, or to settle myself more comfortably, I would tear myself from my book for a moment and notice that everywhere in the house, in the doorways and in the corners, it was dark, and hear the silence, and once again it would be impossible not to stop and listen to that silence, not to peer at the black rectangle of the doorway leading into a dark room; impossible not to remain motionless for ever so long, not to go downstairs and walk through all the empty rooms. Often, too, of an evening, I would sit unobserved in the drawing room, listening to the strains of "The Nightingale" which Gasha would be picking out with two fingers on the piano, as she sat alone in the large ballroom by the light of a tallow candle. And, when the moon was out, I simply could not help getting up from my bed to lie on the sill of the window that opened into the front garden. Peering at the moonlit roof of the Shaposhnikov house and at the slender belfry of our parish church, and at the evening

shadows of the fence and of a bush where they lay across the garden path, I would remain there for so long that I was scarcely able to rouse myself from sleep by ten o'clock the next morning.

Had it not been for my tutors, who continued to come to the house, if not for St.-Jérôme, who occasionally and reluctantly excited my ambition, and, above all, if not for the desire to appear as a bright fellow in the eyes of my friend Nekhlyudov, that is, to pass my examinations with excellent marks, which in his opinion was a matter of great importance, had it not been for all this, the spring and my new freedom should have made me forget everything I had ever known, and I should never have passed my examinations.

Chapter 10

THE HISTORY EXAMINATION

On the 16th of April, escorted by St.-Jérôme, I entered the large University auditorium for the first time. We had arrived in our rather smart phaeton. I wore a dress-coat for the first time in my life, and all my clothes, even my linen and my stockings, were new and of the best quality. When the porter helped me off with my overcoat downstairs and I stood before him in all my finery I even felt a bit ashamed for being so dazzling. However, the moment I entered the bright, crowded auditorium with its parquet floor and saw hundreds of young men, some in high school uniforms and others in dress-coats, a few of whom glanced at me with indifference, and, at the far end, the dignified professors walking idly about between the tables or sitting in large armchairs, I was immediately disappointed in my hopes of attracting the attention of all, and the expression of my face, which at home and even in the University vestibule had denoted some regret that, against my will, I had such a distinguished and imposing appearance, changed to one of the most acute timidity and a certain dejection. I even went to the opposite extreme and was delighted to see on the bench nearest to

me a very poorly and sloppily dressed man who was not yet old, but was almost gray, and who sat apart from the rest on the last bench. I hastened to take a seat beside him and began to scrutinize those who were taking the examination, and to form conclusions about them. Many were the faces and figures there, but according to the concepts I held at the time all could easily be divided into three categories.

There were some like myself, who had come to the examination accompanied by a tutor or parents, and among their number were the younger Ivin with Herr Frost, whom I knew, and Ilenka Grap with his aged father. All these had downy chins, displayed snowy linen and sat quietly without opening the books and notebooks they had brought along, staring with unconcealed awe at the professors and the examination tables. The second category of candidates wore high school uniforms, and many had already begun to shave. These, for the most part, knew one another, spoke loudly, called the professors by name, prepared their replies to the examination questions right there, passed each other notebooks, climbed over the benches, brought in patties and sandwiches from outside and consumed them then and there, merely bending their heads level with the desks. And, finally, the third category of candidates, of whom there were not many, were quite old; some wore dress-coats, but the majority were attired in frock-coats and showed no linen. These conducted themselves gravely, sat apart and looked very glum. The one who had cheered me by being obviously more poorly dressed than myself belonged to this last category. Leaning on his elbows, with his head between his hands and with strands of dishevelled pepper-and-salt hair protruding between his fingers, he was reading a book and, casting a cursory and not very amicable glance at me from his glittering eyes, frowned darkly and then extended a shiny elbow in my direction, so that I might not move any nearer to him. The high school pupils, on the contrary, were too sociable, and I was a bit afraid of them. One, thrusting a book into my hand, said: "Give this to him over there"; another, as he passed me, said: "Let me by, my good man"; a third, climbing over a bench, leaned his

hand on my shoulder as though it were a bench back. All this seemed strange and disagreeable to me. I regarded myself to be vastly superior to these high school pupils and believed that they ought not to treat me with such familiarity. At last, names were called out; the high school pupils went forth boldly, and for the most part showed themselves to be well-prepared, returning in good spirits; our set were much more diffident and apparently did not do as well. Some of the older men did very well, and others very poorly. When the name "Semyonov" was called, my neighbor of the grayish hair and glittering eyes, jostling me rudely, stepped over my legs and went up to the table. As was evident from the professors' faces, he acquitted himself magnificently and with confidence. Returning to his seat, he calmly gathered up his notebooks and left without waiting to learn what mark he had received. I had started several times at the sound of the voice that called out the names, but my turn in alphabetical order had not yet come, though they had already called several names beginning with the letter before mine. "Ikonin and Teniev," someone suddenly shouted from the professors' corner. A chill ran down my head and spine.

"Who was called? Who is Barteniev?" they were saying around me.

"Ikonin, go on, you've been called. But who is Barteniev? Or Mordeniev? I confess, I do not know," said a tall, rosy-cheeked high school pupil standing behind me.

"It is you," said St.-Jérôme.

"My name is Irteniev," I said to the rosy-cheeked youth. "Did they call Irteniev?"

"Why, yes. Why don't you go up? Lord, what a dandy!" he added in an undertone, but loud enough for me to hear as I passed between the benches. I followed Ikonin, a tall young man of about twenty-five who belonged to the third category, the old men. He wore a tight-fitting, olive-green frock-coat and a blue satin cravat over which his long fair hair was carefully brushed behind *à la moujik*. I had noticed his appearance when we were sitting on the benches. He was handsome and talkative, and I had been particularly struck by the strange reddish hair which he had allowed to grow on his throat,

and by the even stranger habit he had of continually unbuttoning his waistcoat to scratch his chest under his shirt.

Three professors sat at the table which Ikonin and I approached. Not one of them acknowledged our bow. The youngest professor was shuffling the question slips like a pack of cards; the second professor, with a decoration on his frock-coat, was looking at a high school pupil who was rapidly discoursing on Charlemagne, adding "actually" after every phrase; and the third, a little old man in spectacles, inclined his head, looked at us over the rims of his spectacles and pointed to the question slips. I felt that his look embraced both Ikonin and myself and that there was something about us that he did not like (possibly Ikonin's red hair), for after taking another look at the pair of us he jerked his head impatiently, signifying that we should each quickly draw a slip. I was vexed and insulted, firstly, because no one had acknowledged our bow and, secondly, because I had apparently been lumped with Ikonin under the same heading of *candidate* and they were already prejudiced against me, on account of Ikonin's red hair. I drew a slip without hesitation and was quite prepared to reply when the professor indicated Ikonin with his eyes. I read my question: it was one I knew. Calmly awaiting my turn, I observed what was going on. Ikonin was not at all intimidated and moved even too abruptly; leaning over sideways to draw a slip, he tossed back his hair and briskly read the question written on it. He had just opened his mouth to begin his recitation, as it seemed to me, when the professor with the star on his frock-coat, having commended the high school pupil and dismissed him, suddenly looked at Ikonin. The latter seemed to have recalled something and halted. There was a dead silence for about two minutes.

"Well?" said the professor in spectacles.

Ikonin opened his mouth and once again said nothing. "You are not the only one here, you know. Do you intend to speak or not?" the young professor demanded, but Ikonin did not even look at him. He stared fixedly at the slip and uttered not a word. The spectacled professor regarded him through his spectacles, then over the rims of

his spectacles, and then without his spectacles, having removed them, polished them carefully and then replaced them. Ikonin had not uttered a word. Suddenly, a smile flashed across his face, he tossed back his hair, once again turned sideways to the table, lay the slip down, looked at each of the professors in turn, then at me, turned on his heel and strode jauntily back to the benches, swinging his arms. The professors exchanged glances.

"That's what those fellows who prepare on their own are like," said the young professor.

I stepped closer to the table, but the professors continued to speak among themselves in near whispers, as though none of them was aware of my presence. At the time, I was firmly convinced that all three professors were deeply concerned about whether or not I should pass the examination, and whether I should pass it well, but that for the sake of appearances they were pretending that it was all the same to them and that they were not aware of me.

When the spectacled professor turned to me with an air of indifference, asking me to speak up, I looked him full in the face for a moment and felt a bit ashamed for his sake, because of his duplicity towards me, and thus floundered somewhat at first, but then rallied, and as the question was one in Russian history, which I knew very well, I finished up brilliantly, and even became so carried away that, wishing to show the professors that I was no Ikonin and that I should not be confused with him, I offered to draw a second question slip; but the professor, nodding his head, said: "Good enough, sir", and wrote something down in the register. Returning to the benches, I immediately learned from the high school pupils who, heaven knows how, seemed to know everything, that I had got a "5".

Chapter 11

THE MATHEMATICS EXAMINATION

At the following examinations I had many new acquaintances besides Grap, whom I considered unworthy of my friendship, and Ivin, who for some reason avoided

me. Some already exchanged greetings with me. Ikonin even seemed glad to see me and informed me that he was to be re-examined in history, that the history professor had had a grudge against him since the previous year's examination, at which he had allegedly also *confounded* him. Semyonov, who, like myself, had registered for the faculty of mathematics, continued to avoid everyone until the very end of the examinations, sitting alone in silence and leaning his head on his hands with his fingers thrust through his grayish hair. He passed his examinations with excellent marks, coming out second; a pupil of the First High School was first. The latter was tall, lean, dark-haired and very pale, with his cheek tied up in a black cravat and with a pimply forehead. His hands were thin and red with extremely long fingers and nails bitten down to the quick, so that his fingertips looked as though they had threads tied around them. All this seemed splendid to me and quite as it should be in the case of a *first high school pupil*. He spoke to everyone quite unaffectedly, and even I made his acquaintance, yet it seemed to me that there was in his gait, in the movement of his lips and in his dark eyes something remarkable, something *magnetic*.

I arrived for the mathematics examination earlier than usual. I knew the subject fairly well, but there were two questions in algebra which I had somehow kept back from the tutor and which I did not know at all. These were, as I still recall: the theory of combinations and Newton's binomial theorem. I took a seat on the last bench and began to look through these two unfamiliar questions, but not being accustomed to studying in a noisy room and anticipating that I should not have sufficient time, I was unable to grasp what I was reading.

"There he is. Come here, Nekhlyudov," I heard Volodya's familiar voice behind me.

I turned and saw my brother and Dmitry who, with their frock-coats unbuttoned and swinging their arms, were making their way towards me between the benches. One could see at a glance that these were second-year students who were completely at home in the University.

The very appearance of their unbuttoned frock-coats expressed their disdain of us matriculants and inspired us with envy and respect. I was vastly flattered to think that everyone around should see that I was acquainted with two second-year students and rose quickly to greet them.

Volodya could not refrain from vaunting his superiority.

"You poor wretch!" said he. "Have you not been examined yet?"

"No."

"What are you reading? Have you not prepared it?"

"Well, two questions are not quite clear to me. I don't understand this."

"What? This?" said Volodya and began explaining Newton's binomial theorem to me, but so rapidly and unintelligibly that, reading in my eyes a distrust of his knowledge, he glanced at Dmitry. No doubt reading the same in his eyes, he blushed, but still went on with his explanations which I did not understand.

"No, wait, Volodya, let me go over it with him if there is time," said Dmitry, glancing at the professors' corner, and took a seat beside me.

I saw at once that my friend was in that gentle, complacent frame of mind that always came over him when he was pleased with himself and that I particularly liked in him. As he was good at mathematics and spoke clearly, he went over the question with me so thoroughly that I remember it to this day. However, he had scarcely finished when St.-Jérôme said in a loud whisper: "*A vous*,[1] *Nicolas!*" Following Ikonin, I rose from the bench before I had had a chance to go over the second unfamiliar question. I approached the table where two professors sat, with a high school pupil standing at the blackboard nearby. He was briskly writing a formula, noisily chipping bits of chalk off against the board, and continued to write, although the professor had already said to him: "That will be enough", and had then told each of us to

[1] It is your turn.

draw a question slip. "Suppose I draw the theory of combinations?" I said to myself, pulling a slip from the soft heap of cut papers with trembling fingers. With the same bold gesture as at the previous examination and swinging sideways, Ikonin took the topmost slip, glanced at it and scowled.

"I always get such devilish questions!" he muttered.

I looked at my own.

O horrors! It was the theory of combinations.

"And what have you got?" Ikonin asked.

I showed him.

"I know that one," he said.

"Would you care to swap?"

"No, it's no use. I feel I am not in the best of form," Ikonin scarcely had time to whisper before the professor called us to the blackboard.

"Well, I'm done for!" I said to myself. "Instead of the brilliant reply which I had hoped to make, I shall be disgraced forever, even worse than Ikonin." But suddenly Ikonin turned to me under the professor's very eyes, snatched the slip from my hand and gave me his. I looked at the slip. It was Newton's binomial theorem.

The professor was a youngish man with a pleasant, astute expression which was due chiefly to the quite prominent lower half of his forehead.

"What is this? Are you exchanging slips, gentlemen?" he said.

"No, he simply let me have a look at his, Professor," Ikonin replied readily, and once again *Professor* was the last word he uttered while standing there; and once again, as he passed me on his way back, he glanced at the professors, at me, smiled and shrugged with an expression that seemed to say: "Cheer up, my friend!" (I later learned that this was the third year in succession that Ikonin had attempted to matriculate.)

I rendered the problem which I had just gone over with ease; the professor even said I had done better than was expected and gave me a "5".

Chapter 12

THE LATIN EXAMINATION

All went well until the Latin examination. The high school pupil with the bandaged cheek was first, Semyonov was second, and I was third. I had begun to feel quite proud of myself and to seriously think that in spite of my youth I was not to be taken lightly.

From the first day of the examinations everyone had spoken with dread of the Latin professor, who was said to be a beast, finding pleasure in the downfall of young men, especially those who had prepared on their own, and who was reputed to converse only in Latin or Greek. St.-Jérôme, who had coached me in Latin, encouraged me, and I myself thought that since I could translate Cicero and several odes of Horace without a dictionary and was well-acquainted with Zumpt's grammar, I was prepared as well as any other, but it turned out otherwise. It the auditorium that morning one heard only of the demise of those who had gone ahead of me: this one had received a naught, that one had received a "1", that one had been admonished as well and threatened with ejection, and so on, and so forth. Semyonov alone and the first pupil went up and returned as calmly as usual, each having received a "5". I had a foreboding of disaster when Ikonin and I were called up together to the small table at which the terrible professor sat all by himself. The terrible professor was a small, lean, sallow-faced man with long greasy hair and a very melancholy countenance.

He handed Ikonin a volume of Cicero's *Speeches* and told him to translate from it.

To my great surprise Ikonin not only read, but even translated a few lines with the aid of the professor, who prompted him. Conscious of my superiority over such a weak rival, I could not help smiling, and even somewhat superciliously, when it came to parsing and Ikonin, as on the previous occasions, subsided into an apparently hopeless silence. I expected my knowing, slightly sarcastic smile to please the professor, but it had the opposite effect.

"You, no doubt, can do better, since you smile," the professor said to me in broken Russian. "We shall see. Now, you recite."

I later learned that the Latin professor favored Ikonin, and that Ikonin even lodged in his house. I replied at once to the question on syntax that Ikonin had been asked, but the professor pulled a long face and turned away from me.

"All right, sir, your turn will come, and we shall see how much you know," said he without looking at me and went on to explain to Ikonin the point in question.

"That will be all," he added, and I saw him enter a "4" for Ikonin in the register. "Why," I said to myself, "he is not at all as strict as they say." After Ikonin had gone he spent a good five minutes, which seemed more like five hours to me, stacking his books and the question slips, blowing his nose, adjusting his armchair, sprawling back in it, looking down the hall and all around and everywhere except at me. All this pretense, however, seemed insufficient to him. He opened a book and made as though he were reading, as though I were not there at all. I drew nearer and cleared my throat.

"Ah, yes! I forgot about you. Well, translate something," he said, handing me a book. "But no, this one, perhaps." He was leafing through a volume of Horace and opened it at a passage which, it seemed to me, no one could ever translate.

"I have not prepared this," said I.

"So you only wish to recite that which you have learned by heart? Excellent! No, translate this."

I began hesitantly to grope for the meaning, but in response to my every inquiring look the professor shook his head, sighed and said: "No." At last, he snapped the book shut so irritably and abruptly that he pinched his finger between the pages; withdrawing it angrily, he handed me a slip with a question on grammar and, leaning back in his armchair, sat there in the most ominous silence. I began to recite, but the expression on his face made me tongue-tied, so that I felt that whatever I said was wrong.

"No, no, that is not it at all," he was suddenly saying

in his terrible Russian, quickly shifting his weight, leaning an elbow on the table and fiddling with the gold ring that hung loosely on one of the lean fingers of his left hand."It won't do, gentlemen, to prepare thus for the University; you all only wish to wear a uniform with a blue-stitched collar; you have a smattering of knowledge and imagine that you can be University students; no, sirs, one must make a thorough study of a subject", and so on, and so forth.

During the whole of this speech, delivered in broken Russian, I stared dully at his lowered eyes. At first, I was mortified at not being third, then gripped by the fear that I should not pass the examination at all, and at last to this was added a sense of injustice, of wounded pride and unmerited humiliation; besides which contempt for the professor for not being, in my estimation, *comme il faut*, as I discovered when I looked at his shirt and at his hard, round nails, still further inflamed me and made all these feelings venomous. Glancing at me and perceiving my quivering lips and tear-filled eyes, he evidently interpreted my agitation as an appeal for a better mark and, as though taking pity on me, he said (and this in the presence of another professor who had just come up):

"All right, sir, I will give you a passing mark (that meant a "2"), though you do not deserve it, but this only out of consideration for your youth and in the hope that when you are a University student you will not be so irresponsible."

This last phrase, spoken in the presence of another professor who looked at me as though he, too, were saying: "So that's how it is, young man!" crushed me completely. There was a moment when a fog veiled my eyes: the terrible professor at his table appeared to be sitting somewhere far off, and a wild thought occurred to me with frightful, single-minded distinctness: "What if... What would come of it?" But for some reason or other I did nothing wild; on the contrary, I found myself bowing to both professors with marked reverence and walking away from the table with a faint smile (I believe it was the very same smile as Ikonin's).

This injustice affected me so at the time that, had

I been free to do as I chose, I should not have taken any of the other examinations. I lost all my ambition (there could no longer be any hope of being third) and drifted through the other examinations without taking any pains or even feeling anxious. My marks, however, averaged over "4", but this no longer interested me in the least; I had reasoned it out and had proved to myself quite clearly that it was extremely silly and even *mauvais genre*[1] to try to be first when one should simply, like Volodya, do neither too poorly nor too well. I intended to adhere to this principle in the future at the University, even though on this point I would, for the first time, disagree with my friend.

I now thought only about my uniform, my cocked hat, a trap of my own, a room of my own and, above all, my freedom.

Chapter 13

I AM GROWN UP

However, these thoughts had a charm of their own.

On the 8th of May, returning from the final examination, which was Bible study, I found waiting at home a familiar tailor's assistant from Rozanov's who had previously delivered my basted uniform and frock-coat of smooth, glossy black cloth and had marked the lapels in chalk, and who had now brought the finished garments with the shiny gilt buttons wrapped in paper.

Having tried on the clothes and found them to be excellent, though St.-Jérôme declared that the back of the frock-coat wrinkled, I went downstairs with a self-satisfied smile, which spread over my face quite involuntarily, and proceeded to Volodya's room, aware of, yet pretending not to notice the looks of the servants that were directed towards me eagerly from the front hall and the corridor. Gavrila, the butler, overtook me in the ballroom, congratulated me on having matriculated, handed me four twen-

[1] Bad form.

ty-five ruble notes on Papa's orders and said that, likewise on Papa's orders, from this day forth the coachman Kuzma, the droshky and the bay horse Krasavchik were to be at my complete disposal. I was so overcome by this almost unexpected good fortune that I was quite unable to feign indifference for Gavrila's sake and, being somewhat stunned and breathless, I said the first thing that entered my head. I think it was: "Krasavchik is a fine trotter." Glancing at the heads that protruded from the doors of the front hall and the corridor and finding it impossible to restrain myself any longer, I raced across the ballroom in my new frock-coat with its shiny gilt buttons. As I entered Volodya's room I heard behind me the voices of Dubkov and Nekhlyudov, who had come to congratulate me and to suggest that we have dinner out and drink champagne in honor of my matriculation. Dmitry said that though he did not care to drink champagne, he would accompany us today and drink a glass to our closer friendship; Dubkov remarked that for some strange reason I resembled a colonel; Volodya did not congratulate me, but merely observed very drily that now we should be able to leave for the country the day after tomorrow, as though, while he was glad that I had matriculated, he was a bit annoyed that now I was just as grown up as he. St.-Jérôme, who had also joined us, said pompously that his duties were now over, that he did not know whether he had fulfilled them well or not, but that he had done all he could and that he was moving to the count's house the next day. In response to all that was said to me I felt that quite against my will a blissful, rather foolish, complacent smile spread across my face and noticed that this smile communicated itself to all who spoke to me.

So I no longer had a tutor, I had my own droshky, my name was entered on the list of students, I wore a sword on a sword-belt, the corner policemen might occasionally salute me... I was grown up and I was, I thought, happy.

We decided to dine at The Yar after four o'clock, but since Volodya went off to Dubkov's house and Dmitry also disappeared, as was his wont, saying that he had something to attend to before dinner, I had two hours at

my disposal. For some time I walked through all the rooms and inspected myself in every glass, now with my frock-coat fully buttoned, now quite unbuttoned, and now buttoned only at the top, and every way it seemed splendid to me. Then, though I was ashamed to exhibit too much joy, I could not forbear going to the stable and the coach house to have a look at Krasavchik, Kuzma and the droshky. Then I again returned and walked about the rooms, glancing in the looking glasses, counting the money in my pocket and smiling blissfully all the while. However, scarcely had an hour passed than I began to feel a bit bored and to regret that there was no one to see me in this finery, and I craved movement and activity. So I ordered the droshky to be drawn up and decided I had best drive to Kuznetsky Bridge Street and make some purchases.

I recalled that when Volodya had entered the University he bought himself several lithographs of horses by Victor Adam, some tobacco and several pipes, and I felt it essential to do the same.

With eyes turned on me from all sides and with the bright glitter of the sun on my buttons, on the cockade of my hat and on my sword, I reached Kuznetsky Bridge Street and stopped outside Dazziaro's Art Shop. Looking around, I stepped inside. I did not want to buy any horses by Victor Adam, so as not to be accused of aping Volodya, but hurrying because I was embarraseed at the trouble to which I was putting the obliging shopmen, I quickly chose a gouache portrait of a woman which was in the window and paid twenty rubles for it. Nevertheless, after paying over the twenty rubles, I still felt uneasy at having troubled two such handsomely-dressed clerks about such a trifle, besides which they still seemed to regard me rather too indifferently. Wishing to show them what sort of a person I was, I turned my attention to a silver object in a display case and, upon being told that it was a *porte-crayon*[1] which cost eighteen rubles, I asked them to wrap it up; having paid over the sum and learning that good pipe stems and tobacco were to be had at

[1] Pencil holder.

the tobacconist's next door, I bowed politely to the clerks and went out with the picture under my arm. In the adjoining shop, whose signboard displayed a Negro smoking a cigar, I bought, again from a desire not to imitate anyone, not Zhukov, but Turkish tobacco, a Turkish pipe bowl, one linden and one rosewood pipe stem. On emerging from the shop and going to my droshky, I caught sight of Semyonov dressed in civilian clothes and striding rapidly down the sidewalk with a lowered head. I was annoyed at his not having recognized me. Rather loudly I said: "Here, Kuzma!" got into the droshky and overtook Semyonov.

"How do you do, sir," I said to him.

"Good day," he replied, continuing on his way.

"Why are you not in uniform?" I asked.

Semyonov stopped, squinted, showed his white teeth, as though he found it painful to look at the sun, but actually to express his indifference to my droshky and my uniform, surveyed me in silence and walked on.

From Kuznetsky Bridge Street I drove to a pastry shop on Tverskaya Street and, though I wished to appear chiefly interested in the newspapers they had there, could not refrain from consuming one pastry after another. Feeling ashamed of the gentleman who watched me in wonder from behind his newspaper, I rapidly devoured one of each of the eight varieties of pastry they had in the shop.

Returning home, I felt a touch of indigestion, but taking no notice of it, began to examine my purchases. I disliked the picture so much that not only did I not have it framed and hung in my room, as Volodya had done, but hid it carefully away behind the chest of drawers where no one could see it. Here at home I did not like the *porte-crayon*, either, so I put it in the drawer of my writing table, consoling myself, however, by the thought that it was made of silver, was a good investment and very useful to a student. The articles for smoking, however, I decided to try out at once.

Opening a quarter-pound packet, I tamped down the fine-cut, reddish-yellow Turkish tobacco in my Turkish pipe bowl, applied a smoldering tinder to it and, taking

the pipe stem between my third and fourth fingers (a position of the hand that especially pleased me), I began to draw in the smoke.

• The aroma of the tobacco was very agreeable, but my mouth tasted bitter and my breath came in gasps. However, bracing myself, I continued to draw in the smoke for quite some time, attempted to blow smoke rings and to inhale. Soon the room became filled with clouds of bluish smoke, the pipe began to wheeze, the hot tobacco to jump. I felt a bitterness in my mouth and a slight giddiness. I decided it was about time to stop and wished only to have a look at myself in the glass with my pipe when, to my astonishment, I staggered; the room began to revolve and, looking into the glass which I had reached with difficulty, I saw that my face was as white as a sheet. I had scarcely time to collapse onto the sofa before I felt so nauseous and so faint that, imagining the pipe to be fatal to me, it seemed to me that I was dying. I was truly alarmed and thought of calling for help and sending for the doctor.

However, this panic did not last long. I soon realized what the matter was and lay on the sofa for a long time with a splitting headache and feeling quite weak, staring vacantly at the Bostanjonglo coat-of-arms tobacco trademark on the packet, at the pipe and various oddments scattered on the floor; and, disillusioned, I sadly thought: "Evidently I am not yet completely grown up if I cannot smoke like others do, and it is apparently not my lot to hold a pipe stem between my third and fourth fingers like others do, to inhale and blow smoke out through a fair mustache."

Dmitry, stopping by for me after four, found me in this sorry state. After drinking a glass of water, however, I felt almost well again and was ready to accompany him.

"I cannot see why you should want to smoke," he said, observing the traces of my smoking. "It is all silliness and a needless waste of money. I have promised myself never to smoke... However, make haste. We must still call for Dubkov."

Chapter 14

VOLODYA AND DUBKOV'S INTERESTS

As soon as Dmitry entered my room I knew by his expression and by the habitual gesture he made whenever he was in a bad humor – blinking and jerking his head, as though he were adjusting his cravat – that he was in the coldly-stubborn frame of mind that came over him whenever he was dissatisfied with himself and that always had a chilling effect on my affection for him. Of late, I had begun to observe and pass judgement on my friend's character, but our friendship had suffered no change in consequence; it was still so young and strong that no matter from what angle I observed Dmitry, I could not help but regard him as perfect. There were two different persons in him, both of whom I found admirable. One, whom I liked immensely, was kind, affectionate and cheerful, and conscious of these amiable qualities. When he was in this frame of mind his very appearance, the sound of his voice and all his movements seemed to say: "I am meek and virtuous, and I enjoy being meek and virtuous, as you can all see." The other, whom I had only now begun to discover and whose magnificence I worshipped, was cold, exacting towards himself and others, proud, fanatically religious and pedantically moral. At the present moment he was this second man.

With the frankness that constituted an essential condition of our relations, I told him when we had seated ourselves in the droshky that I was sad and pained to see him on this happy day of my life in a state of mind that was to me so depressing and disagreeable.

"Something must have upset you: why will you not tell me?" I asked.

"Nikolenka!" he replied slowly, jerking his head and blinking. "Since I have given you my word never to conceal anything from you, you have no cause to suspect me of being secretive. One cannot always be equally well-disposed, and if anything has upset me, I cannot account for it myself."

"What a marvellously frank and honest nature he has," I thought and said no more to him.

In silence we arrived at Dubkov's house. Dubkov's apartments were truly splendid, or so they seemed to me. Everywhere there were carpets, paintings, drapes, bright wallpaper, portraits, carved armchairs and wing chairs, and on the walls there hung rifles, pistols, tobacco pouches and some papier-mâché heads of wild beasts. As soon as I saw this study I realized who it was Volodya had imitated in the furnishing of his room. We found Dubkov and Volodya at cards. Someone I did not know (and apparently of no great consequence, to judge by his humble attitude) sat by the table, following the game closely. Dubkov wore a silk dressing-gown and soft leather shoes. Volodya, coatless, sat on the sofa opposite him and, judging by his flushed face and the impatient, displeased glance he flung at us as he tore his eyes from the cards for a moment, was completely engrossed in the game. On catching sight of me, his face became redder still.

"Your deal," he said to Dubkov. I guessed that he was displeased at my having discovered that he played cards. But his face bore no sign of embarrassment; it seemed say to me: "Yes, I play cards, and you are surprised only because you are still so young. Far from being wrong, it is the very thing to do at our age."

I instantly felt and understood this.

Dubkov, however, did not deal the cards but rose, shook our hands, sat us down and offered us pipes, which we declined.

"Well, here he is, our diplomat, the reason for our celebration," said Dubkov. "I swear, he looks just like a colonel."

"Hm!" I mumbled, once again feeling a foolishly complacent smile spreading over my face.

I respected Dubkov as only a sixteen-year-old boy can respect a twenty-seven-year-old adjutant who is said by all the grown-ups to be an exceptionally well-bred young man, who dances splendidly, speaks French and who, while at heart despising me for my youth, is obviously doing his best to conceal this.

In spite of my genuine respect, in all the time that we were acquainted, I found it, heaven only knows why, difficult and embarrassing to look him in the eye. I have since noticed that there are three kinds of people into whose eyes I find it embarrassing to look: those who are much worse than I; those who are much better than I; and those with whom I share a knowledge of something which neither of us dares to mention to the other. Perhaps Dubkov was better than I, perhaps he was worse than I, but one thing was certain: that he very often lied without admitting it, and that I noticed this weakness of his, but of course could not bring myself to speak to him of it.

"Let us play another hand," Volodya said, jerking his shoulder like Papa and shuffling the cards.

"Don't be a bore," said Dubkov. "We'll finish the game later. Well, all right then, let us play one more hand."

I watched their hands as they played. Volodya had large, well-shaped hands; the angle of his thumb and the curve of his fingers as he held his cards were so like Papa's that for a while I thought Volodya held them like that to resemble a grown man; but when I glanced at his face it was at once evident that he was thinking of nothing but the game. Dubkov's hands, on the contrary, were small, plump, bent inwards, extremely adroit and with soft fingers; they were the kind of hands on which one sees rings and which belong to people inclined to craftsmanship and fond of pretty things.

Volodya must have lost, for the man who was looking at the cards he held remarked that Vladimir Petrovich had terribly bad luck, and Dubkov, getting out his pocket notebook, entered something in it. Then, showing it to Volodya, he said: "Right?"

"Right!" said Volodya as he glanced at the notebook with feigned indifference. "Now, let us go."

Volodya took Dubkov with him, and Dmitry took me in his phaeton.

"What were they playing?" I asked Dmitry.

"Piquet. It's a stupid game, and gambling in general is stupid."

"Do they play for high stakes?"

"Not very high, but all the same, it's wrong."

"And do you not play?"

"No, I have vowed not to gamble; but Dubkov is not happy if he cannot win at cards."

"But that's not right of him," I said. "Volodya probably plays worse than he."

"Certainly it's wrong, but there is nothing really bad about it. Dubkov likes to play and plays well, but he is a fine fellow nonetheless."

"Why, I did not mean ..." I began.

"Indeed, one ought not think ill of him, for he truly is a fine fellow. And I am very fond of him and shall always be fond of him, in spite of his failings."

It seemed to me that just because Dmitry was defending Dubkov so warmly he no longer liked or respected him, but was not going to admit it out of obstinacy, lest he be accused of inconstancy. He was one of those people who are devoted to their friends for life, not so much because these friends continue to be dear to them, as because, having once grown fond of a person, even mistakenly, they consider it dishonorable to withdraw their affection.

Chapter 15

I AM FÊTED

Dubkov and Volodya knew everyone by name at The Yar, and everyone from the hall porter to the proprietor treated them with great respect. We were immediately shown into a private room and served an amazing dinner which Dubkov selected from the French menu. A bottle of iced champagne, which I attempted to regard with marked indifference, was already set out. The dinner passed off most agreeably and merrily, though Dubkov, as was his wont, told us the strangest stories, quite as though they were true, such as the story of his grandmother firing a blunderbuss and killing three brigands who had attacked her (at which I blushed and, lowering my eyes, averted my face), and though Volodya quailed visibly whenever I opened my mouth to speak (which was quite uncalled for, since I did not, as far as I recall, say anything of which he might have been ashamed). When the champagne was served they all toasted me and, link-

g arms first with Dubkov and then with Dmitry, drank and exchanged kisses, after which we were free to ldress each other as *tu*. Since I did not know who was anding the champagne (it was a joint bottle, as I was ter told) and wished to treat my friends with the money incessantly fingered in my pocket, I stealthily extracted ten-ruble note, called to the waiter, handed it to him ıd in a whisper, but so that all could hear, as they were l looking at me in silence, told him to be so good as to ring *another split of champagne*. Volodya went red, rked his shoulder and looked at me and at the others ith such alarm that I saw how badly I had blundered, ut the split was brought in, and we drank it with the reatest of pleasure. Everything still seemed very jolly. ubkov spun one yarn after another, and Volodya counted such amusing stories and so well, something hich I should never have expected of him, that we ughed a great deal. The nature of Volodya and Dubov's wit took the form of inventing new twists to the ell-known anecdote: "I hear you have been abroad?" ne man says. "No, I have not," the other replies, "but ıy brother plays the violin." They had reached such perction in this vein of comic inanity that the original anecote was now recounted as "my brother also never played ıe violin". They would reply to one another's questions ı this manner and sometimes, even without waiting for question, did their best to simply pair the two most incongruous ideas, expounding this nonsense with serious ıces so that the result was very funny. I was beginning to ıtch on and wished also to recount something amusing ıyself, but the others looked at me with trepidation or ied not to look at me at all while I was speaking, and ıy anecdote fell flat. Dubkov said: "That is quite a tall ıle, Diplomat," but I was so elated from the champagne had drunk and from being in the company of grown en that the remark seemed scarcely a pinprick. Dmitry one, though he drank as much as we did, remained in s sober, serious frame of mind, which put a certain ıeck upon the general hilarity.

"Now then, gentlemen," Dubkov said, "after dinner we ust take the diplomat in hand. Supposing we go *to*

Auntie's? We shall see to him there."

"But Nekhlyudov will not go," said Volodya.

"You insufferable saint!" Dubkov said to Dmitry. "Come with us. You'll see what an excellent lady Auntie is."

"I am not going, and I will not let him go with you, either," Dmitry replied, flushing.

"Whom? The diplomat? You do want to go, Diplomat, don't you? Look, he actually brightened at the mention of Auntie."

"It's not really that I will not let him go," Dmitry went on, rising and beginning to pace the room, while avoiding my eyes, "but I do not advise him to and do not want him to go. He is not a child now, and if he wishes to, he can go by himself, without you. But you ought to be ashamed of yourself, Dubkov; because you do wrong, you want others to do the same."

"What is so wrong about inviting you all to Auntie's for a cup of tea?" said Dubkov, winking at Volodya. "Well, and if you are displeased by our going, well then, as you wish: Volodya and I will go. Will you come along, Volodya?"

"Uh-huh," Volodya replied affirmatively. "We shall drive there, and then come back to my place and finish our game of piquet."

"Well, do you want to go with them or not?" said Dmitry, coming up to me.

"No," I replied, moving to make room for him beside me on the sofa, where he sat down. "I do not wish to go, in general, and if you advise me against it, then nothing will induce me to go."

"No," I added a moment later, "I am not telling the truth about not wanting to go with them; but I am glad that I am not going."

"Fine," he said. "Live as you think right, and do not dance to anyone else's fiddle. That is the best way."

This little dispute, far from spoiling our pleasure, yet further increased it. Dmitry suddenly reverted to the mild frame of mind I liked best. As I later had occasion to note, a consciousness of having acted well had this effect on him. He was pleased with himself now for having fended them off. He became very cheerful, ordered

another bottle of champagne (which was against his rules), invited a perfect stranger into our room, made him drink with us, sang *Gaudeamus igitur*, requesting all of us to join in the chorus, and proposed a drive to Sokolniki, whereupon Dubkov remarked that this would be too sentimental.

"Let us enjoy ourselves today," said Dmitry with a smile. "To mark his matriculation I will get drunk for the very first time. So there." This joviality was strangely becoming to Dmitry. He resembled a tutor or a kind father who is pleased with his children and is jolly, and wants to make them happy, and, at the same time, show them that it is possible to enjoy oneself in a decent and honorable fashion; but in spite of this his unexpected joviality was catching, the more so since we had now each of us consumed nearly half a bottle of champagne.

In this agreeable frame of mind I went out into the main salon to light the cigarette which Dubkov had given me.

In rising from my seat, I noticed that my head was a bit light and my arms and legs behaved normally only so long as I concentrated my attention on them. Otherwise, my feet kept veering off to a side and my hands gesticulated. I fixed my attention on my limbs, commanded my hands to rise, button my frock-coat and smooth my hair (at which my elbows shot up terribly high) and ordered my feet to walk through the door, which they did, but they stepped somehow either very firmly or too gingerly, especially my left foot, which would step only on tiptoe. A voice called out to me: "Where are you going? They will bring you a candle." I guessed that the voice belonged to Volodya, and it pleased me to think that I had guessed correctly, but I merely smiled airily in reply and continued on my way.

Chapter 16

THE ALTERCATION

In the main salon a short, thickset civilian with a red mustache sat eating something at a small table. Beside him was a tall, dark, clean-shaven man. They were speak-

ing French. Their glances disconcerted me, but I decided to light my cigarette at the candle in front of them all the same. Looking around so as not to meet their eyes, I went up to their table and began lighting my cigarette. When it was lit I could not resist casting a glance at the man who was dining. His gray eyes were fixed on me malevolently. Just as I was about to turn away, his red mustache twitched and he intoned in French:

"I do not like people to smoke when I am dining, sir."

I mumbled something incoherently.

"No, sir, I do not like it," the man with the mustache continued sternly, casting a swift glance at the clean-shaven man, as though inviting him to see what a dressing-down he was giving me. "Nor do I care, my dear sir, for those who are so discourteous as to come and smoke in my face; I do not care for those, either." I realized at once that the man was berating me and for a moment felt that I was very much at fault.

"I did not think it would incommode you," I said.

"Ah, you did not think you were a boor. But I did!" the man shouted.

"What right have you to shout?" said I, feeling that he was insulting me and beginning to grow angry myself.

"This right: that I will never allow anyone to insult me and will always teach young boys like you to be respectful. What is your name, sir? And where do you live?"

I was so infuriated that my lips quivered and my breath came in gasps. But still, I felt guilty, no doubt for having drunk too much champagne, and I did not say anything at all impertinent to him. On the contrary, my lips most obediently told him my name and my address.

"My name is Kolpikov, sir, and see that in future you are more courteous. You shall hear from me again (*vous aurez de mes nouvelles*)," he concluded, as the entire conversation had been conducted in French.

All I said was: "At your service", attempting to make my voice as firm as possible, and still holding the cigarette which had by this time gone out, I turned and went back to our room.

I said nothing of what had happened, either to my brother or to my friends, particularly as they were

absorbed in a heated discussion of their own, took a seat by myself in a corner and began deliberating on this strange incident. The words: "You are a boor, sir" (*un mal élevé, monsieur*) rang in my ears, making me feel more and more indignant. My inebriety had vanished completely. When I reflected on the way I had acted in this affair I was suddenly struck by the terrible thought that I had behaved like a coward. "What right had he to attack me? Why did he not simply tell me that it disturbed him? Therefore, was he not in the wrong? Why, then, when he called me a boor, did I not say to him: 'A boor, sir, is one who permits himself to be rude.' Or why did I not simply shout at him: *Hold your tongue!* That would have been splendid. Why did I not challenge him to a duel? No! I did nothing of the kind, but swallowed the affront like a wretched little coward." "You are a boor, sir!" the words resounded incessantly and irritatingly in my ears. "No, I cannot let this pass," I said to myself and rose with the firm intention of going back to the man again and saying something outrageous to him, even perhaps smiting him on the head with the candlestick, were things to reach such a pass. This last idea afforded me vast pleasure, but it was with a faint heart that I again entered the main salon. Fortunately, Kolpikov was no longer there, and a waiter clearing the table was the only person in the large room. I was about to tell him of what had happened, and to explain to him that I was not at all to blame, but for some reason or other I did not and went back to our room in a most dismal frame of mind.

"What has come over our diplomat?" said Dubkov. "Truly, he must be deciding the fate of Europe."

"Oh, leave me alone," I said sullenly and turned away. After this, walking up and down the room, I began reflecting for some reason or other about Dubkov not being a good man at all. "And why these endless jokes and the nickname 'Diplomat'? There is nothing amicable about it. All he cares about is winning from Volodya at cards and visiting some auntie ... And there is nothing agreeable about him. Everything he says is a lie or a commonplace, and he always attempts to make fun of people. I believe he is simply a fool, and obnoxious into the bargain."

I spent about five minutes in such reflections, growing ever more conscious of a rising anger against Dubkov. Dubkov, however, paid no heed to me, and this irritated me still more. I was even angry at Volodya and Dmitry for conversing with him.

"Look here, gentlemen. We must pour some water on the diplomat," Dubkov said all of a sudden, casting a glance at me with what I felt was a derisive, if not treacherous, smile, "because he's in a bad way! I swear, he's in a bad way."

"And you must be doused, too. You're in a bad way yourself," I replied, smiling viciously and quite forgetting that I had begun saying *tu* to him.

This reply must have astonished Dubkov, but he turned away with an air of indifference and continued talking with Volodya and Dmitry.

I tried to join in their conversation, but feeling utterly unable to pretend, I once again went off to my corner, where I remained until our departure.

When the bill had been settled and they were putting on their greatcoats, Dubkov said to Dmitry:

"Well, and where are Orestes and Pylades going? Home, I suppose, to discourse of *love*; now, we are going to visit dear Auntie, which is far better than your sour company."

"How dare you say that and make fun of us?" I suddenly flared up, drawing very close to him and waving my arms. "How dare you make fun of feelings you cannot understand? I will not allow you to! Hold your tongue!" I shouted and fell silent myself, not knowing what more to say and breathless from agitation. Dubkov was at first surprised; then he tried to smile and to take it as a joke, but in the end, to my complete astonishment, he grew alarmed and lowered his eyes.

"I am not mocking you or your feelings at all, it's simply my way of speaking," he said evasively.

"That's better!" I shouted, but the next moment I felt ashamed of myself and sorry for Dubkov, whose flushed and disconcerted face expressed genuine suffering.

"What is the matter with you?" Volodya and Dmitry said, speaking together. "No one wished to offend you."

"Indeed, he wanted to insult me."

"What a hot-headed fellow your brother is," Dubkov remarked as he passed through the door, so that he might not hear my rejoinder.

I would perhaps have run after him and flung yet more abuse at him, but just then the very same waiter who had been present during my encounter with Kolpikov helped me on with my greatcoat, and I at once calmed down, pretending merely for Dmitry's sake to be angry, but only to such a degree as was necessary to prevent my sudden appeasement from seeming odd to him. The following day Dubkov and I met in Volodya's room. We did not allude to the incident, but never again addressed each other as *tu*, and it was more difficult than ever for us to meet one another's eyes.

The memory of my clash with Kolpikov, who, however, never did send me *de ses nouvelles*, either the following day or on any other, remained for many years to come most vivid and painful to me. For perhaps a full five years after the incident I writhed and groaned each time I remembered the unavenged affront, and consoled myself by recalling with satisfaction that I had shown myself to be a spirited fellow in the encounter with Dubkov. Only much later did I come to see the matter in quite a different light and to look back with amused pleasure on the Kolpikov affair, and to regret the undeserved abuse to which I had subjected *good old* Dubkov.

When that very evening I told Dmitry of my altercation with Kolpikov, whose appearance I described to him in detail, he was astounded.

"Why, it's the very same fellow!" he said. "Imagine, this Kolpikov is a notorious scoundrel, a cardsharp, and above all, a coward who was expelled from his regiment by his brother-officers for having had his face slapped and refusing to fight a duel. Where did he get the nerve?" he added, looking at me with a good-natured smile. "He did not call you anything worse than a boor, did he?"

"No," I replied, blushing.

"It is unfortunate, but pay it no heed!" Dmitry consoled me.

Only long afterwards, reflecting calmly on the incident,

did I arrive at the rather plausible conclusion that Kolpikov, sensing that I might be attacked with impunity, avenged himself on me after so many years in the presence of the dark, clean-shaven man for the slap he had received, just as I had instantly avenged myself for Kolpikov's affront on the innocent Dubkov.

Chapter 17

I PREPARE TO PAY SOME CALLS

On waking the next morning, my first thought was of my encounter with Kolpikov. Once again I moaned and rushed about the room, but there was nothing I could do; besides, this was my last day in Moscow, and on Papa's instructions I had to pay several calls which he himself had listed for me on a slip of paper. Papa's solicitude on our account did not concern our morals or education so much as our social connexions. Written on the slip in his rapid, jagged script was: 1) Prince Ivan Ivanovich *without fail*, 2) the Ivins *without fail*, 3) Prince Mikhailo, 4) Princess Nekhlyudova and Mme Valakhina, if you have the time. And, of course, the curator, the rector and the professors.

Dmitry dissuaded me from paying these latter calls, saying that it was not only unnecessary, but even improper; however, all the other calls had to be paid that very day. Of these I most dreaded the first two, both of which had been marked by the words *without fail*. Prince Ivan Ivanovich held the rank of general-in-chief and was an extremely wealthy old man living alone; that meant that I, a sixteen-year-old student, would have to meet him on my own, which, I surmised, would not be to my advantage. The Ivins were also extremely wealthy, and the father was some important civilian general who had called on us only once, when Grandmother was still alive. After Grandmother's death, however, I had noticed that the youngest Ivin avoided us and seemed aloof. The eldest, so I was told, had already taken his degree in law and was in gov-

ernment service in St. Petersburg; the second, Sergei, whom I had once worshipped, was also in St. Petersburg, a tall, stout cadet in the *Corps des Pages*.

In my youth I not only disliked having anything to do with people who considered themselves above me, but such intercourse was unbearably painful to me, owing to my constant dread of being snubbed and to the strain put on my mental faculties to prove to them my independence. However, if I was not going to carry out Papa's last injunction I would have to make amends by complying with the preceding ones. I was pacing the room, examining my clothes, my sword and my hat that were all laid out on chairs, and was preparing to set forth when old Grap, accompanied by Ilenka, arrived to congratulate me. The elder Grap was a Russified German, intolerably smooth-tongued, adulating and all too often intoxicated; as a rule, he called on us when he had a request to make, and Papa occasionally received him in his study, but never asked him to dine with us. His servility and wheedling had become so closely interwoven with a kind of superficial good-nature and familiarity with our house that everyone attributed great merit to him for his ostensible attachment to us all, but for some reason I did not like him and felt abashed whenever he spoke.

I was quite vexed by the arrival of these callers and made no effort to conceal my annoyance. So accustomed was I to look down on Ilenka, and so accustomed was he to consider me right in doing so, that I was rather put out at his being a student like myself. It seemed to me that he, too, felt rather guilty finding himself on an equal footing with me. I greeted them coldly and did not offer them chairs, for I was embarrassed to do so, thinking that they might sit down without being asked, and I ordered the droshky to be readied. Ilenka was a good-natured, most upright and by no means stupid young man, but he was what is known as a fellow with a bee in his bonnet; he was forever and, it seemed, without apparent reason, in the throes of some extreme emotion: now tearfulness, now giddiness, now touchiness at the slightest provocation; and now, as it seemed, he was in this latter state. He did not speak, kept glancing malevolently at me and at his father, and only when spoken to did he smile his docile, forced smile, under

which he had already learned to conceal all his emotions, and particularly the feeling of shame for his father which he could not help but experience in our presence.

"Yes, sir, Nikolai Petrovich," the old man was saying, following me about the room while I dressed and slowly and reverently turning between his thick fingers a silver snuffbox my grandmother had given him, "as soon as I learned from my son that you had been pleased to pass your examinations so splendidly, though of course everyone knows what a fine mind you have, I at once came hurrying over to congratulate you, dear sir. Why, I used to carry you around on my shoulder, and as God is my witness, I love all of you like my own kin, and Ilenka here did so beg to come. He, too, has become attached to you."

Ilenka had been sitting silently by the window all this time, ostensibly examining my cocked hat and muttering angrily under his breath.

"But what I wanted to ask you, Nikolai Petrovich," the old man went on, "is how my Ilenka made out? Did he do well at the examinations? He says that he will be studying with you, so pray don't forsake him, but keep an eye on him and advise him."

"Why, he passed splendidly," I replied, glancing at Ilenka, who, feeling my eyes on him, turned red and ceased moving his lips.

"Might he spend the day with you?" asked the old man with such a timid smile one might have thought he was terribly afraid of me, and yet, no matter which way I turned, he followed me so closely that I did not for a moment cease being aware of the smell of vodka and tobacco of which he reeked. I was annoyed that he was placing me in such a false position with regard to his son and that he was distracting my attention from what was then to me a most important occupation: my toilet; but above all, I was so upset by the clinging smell of stale vodka that I replied icily that I could not spend any time with Ilenka, as I would be out all day.

"Why, Father, you intended to go to your sister's," said Ilenka, smiling and avoiding my eyes, "and I have something to attend to also." I felt still more vexed and uncomfortable, and to expiate my refusal, I hastened to in-

form them that I should not be at home, because I had to call on *Prince* Ivan Ivanovich, on *Princess* Kornakova, on the Ivins, the very same Ivin who held such a distinguished position, and that I should no doubt dine with *Princess* Nekhlyudova. It seemed to me that, on learning what distinguished people I was going to see, they certainly could not claim any of my time. As they were leaving, I invited Ilenka to come around some other day, but he only muttered something with a constrained smile. It was obvious that he would never again set foot in my house.

I drove out on my calls immediately after. Volodya, whom I had that morning asked to go with me so that I should not feel so ill at ease by myself, had declined on the pretext that it would be just too sentimental for two *dear little brothers* to go out driving together in one *small conveyance.*

Chapter 18

THE VALAKHINS

And so, I set out alone. I called first on Madame Valakhina, who lived closest to us in Sivtsev Vrazhek. I had not seen Sonichka for some three years, and my love for her had of course passed away long ago, yet, there still lingered in my heart a vivid and touching memory of that vanished childish affection. There were times during those three years when I recalled her with such force and clarity that I shed tears and felt myself in love again, but this feeling only lasted for a few moments and did not soon recur.

I knew that Sonichka and her mother had been abroad for some two years, and while there, rumor had it, they had been thrown from a diligence. Sonichka's face had been badly cut by broken glass, which had apparently spoiled her looks. On the way to their house I pictured Sonichka as she used to be and wondered what she would now be like. I imagined her for some reason to be quite

tall after her two years' stay abroad, with a beautiful waist, and though sedate and solemn, extremely beautiful. My mind refused to picture a face disfigured by scars; on the contrary, having heard somewhere of a passionate lover who had remained true to his love though she was scarred by smallpox, I tried to think that I was in love with Sonichka, so as to have the merit of remaining true to her despite her scars. As a matter of fact, when I drove up to the Valakhins' house I was not in love, but having stirred the memories of my former love I was quite prepared to fall in love, and truly wished to, the more so as I had for some time now felt ashamed to be left out when I saw all my friends in love. The Valakhins lived in a small, neat wooden house which one entered from a yard. The door was opened to me, at the ring of a little bell which was then still quite a rarity in Moscow, by a tiny, trim little boy. He could not or would not tell me whether his mistress was at home, but leaving me alone in the dark hall he ran off down a still darker passage.

I remained alone for some time in that dark hall which in addition to the front door and that leading to the passage had another that was closed. I was somewhat surprised at the gloomy interior of the house and supposed that this was rather to be expected in the home of a family that had lived abroad. In about five minutes the door leading to the salon was opened from within by the very same boy who led me into a neat but modest drawing room into which Sonichka followed me.

She was seventeen, very small and very thin, with a sallow, unhealthy complexion. No scars at all were visible on her face, but her lovely prominent eyes and bright, good-natured smile were the same I had known and loved in childhood. I had not at all expected to find her like this, and so I could not at once abandon myself to the sentiments I had summoned up on the way. She offered me her hand in the English fashion, which was then as great a novelty as the doorbell, pressed my hand frankly and made me sit beside her on the sofa.

"Oh, how happy I am to see you, dear *Nicolas*," she said, looking into my face with so sincere an expression of pleasure that in the words *dear Nicolas* I felt a friendly

and not a patronizing tone of voice. To my surprise, she was, after her travels abroad, even more natural, sweet and warm in her attitude towards me than she had been before. I noticed two small scars, one beside her nose and another on her eyebrow, but her beautiful eyes and smile were exactly as I remembered them and shone as of old.

"How you have changed!" she said. "You are quite grown up. And what about me, how do you find me?"

"Oh, I should never have recognized you," I replied, although at that very moment I was thinking that I should have recognized her anywhere. I again felt myself in that carefree, happy frame of mind of five years ago when I had danced the *Grossvater* with her at Grandmother's ball.

"Why? Have I grown very ugly?" she asked, tossing her head.

"No, not at all. You have grown a bit taller and are older," I hastened to reply, "but, on the contrary ... and even ..."

"Oh, well, no matter. And do you remember our dances and games, St.-Jérôme and Madame Dorat?" (I did not remember any Madame Dorat at all; she was evidently carried away by the pleasure of childish reminiscences and was confusing them.) "Oh, it was a lovely time," she continued, and the same smile, or a better one even than I preserved in my memory, and the same eyes shone before me. While she was speaking I had time to reflect on the condition I was in at the moment and decided that at the moment I was in love. The instant I decided this my happy, carefree frame of mind vanished, a fog obscured everything before me, even her eyes and smile, and I felt abashed, blushed hotly and grew tongue-tied.

"Times have changed so," she continued, sighing and raising her brows a little. "Things are much worse now, and we, too, have changed for the worse, have we not, *Nicolas*?"

I could not reply, and looked at her in silence.

"Where are all the Ivins and the Kornakovs now? Remember?" she continued, looking with some curiosity

at my flushed and frightened face. "What a glorious time that was!"

I was still unable to utter a word.

The entrance of Madame Valakhina released me from this painful condition for a while. I rose, bowed and recovered the power of speech; but her mother's appearance occasioned a strange change in Sonichka. All her cheerfulness and familiarity vanished, and even her smile changed, so that except for her stature she suddenly became the sort of young lady returned from abroad that I had expected to find. There seemed no reason for such a transformation, since her mother smiled just as amicably and in all her movements evinced the same gentleness as of old. Madame Valakhina sat down in a large armchair and indicated a seat beside herself for me. She said something to her daughter in English, and Sonichka at once left the room, which was an even greater relief to me. Madame Valakhina inquired about my family, my brother and my father, and then told me of her bereavement, the loss of her husband, and, at last, feeling that there was nothing more to speak about, she looked at me in silence, as though to say: "If you get up now, take your leave and depart, you will be doing very well, my dear", but something odd had happened to me. Sonichka returned with her needlework and took a seat in the far corner of the drawing room, so that I felt her eyes upon me. While Madame Valakhina had been telling me about the loss of her husband, I again remembered that I was in love and then imagined that perhaps the mother, too, had guessed this. I was once again overcome by a fit of shyness so impeditive that I felt unable to move a single limb naturally. I knew that in order to rise and leave I should have to think of how to place my foot, what to do with my head and my hand; in short, I felt almost as I had the previous evening after drinking half a bottle of champagne. I had a presentiment that I should not be able to manage all this and that I therefore *could not* rise and, indeed, I *could not* do so. Madame Valakhina was no doubt surprised to see my face beet-red and my complete immobility, but I decided that it was preferable to sit there in that foolish state rather than risk getting up and making a ridiculous

exit. Thus did I sit on for some time, hoping that some unforeseen occurrence would help me out of my predicament. The occurrence presented itself in the person of an ungainly young man who entered the room with the ease of one of the family and bowed to me politely. Madame Valakhina rose and excused herself, saying that she had to speak to her *homme d'affaires*,[1] and looked at me with a puzzled expression which intimated: "If you wish to sit here forever, I won't turn you out." By some tremendous effort of will I got to my feet, but was unable to bow, and as I went out, followed by pitying looks from both mother and daughter, I tripped over a chair which had not been at all in my way, and did this, because I was so intent on not stumbling over the carpet under my feet. Once out in the fresh air, I flailed my arms and groaned so loudly that even Kuzma inquired several times: "What is it, sir?" However, this feeling passed, and I began to meditate rather calmly on my love for Sonichka and on her relations with her mother, which seemed quite strange to me. When I afterwards told my father that I had noticed that Madame Valakhina and her daughter were not on good terms, he said:

"Yes, she torments the poor girl by her dreadful stinginess, and it is odd," he added with more feeling than mere kinship could have accounted for. "What a beautiful, charming woman she used to be! I cannot understand why she has changed so. Did you perhaps see there a secretary of sorts? And what a weird idea it is, indeed, for a Russian lady to have a secretary," he said crossly, walking away from me.

"Yes, I saw him," I replied.

"Is he at least handsome?"

"No, not at all."

"Incomprehensible," said Papa, then jerked his shoulder angrily and cleared his throat.

"So now I, too, am in love," I thought as I drove off in my droshky.

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[1] Manager.

Chapter 19

THE KORNAKOVS

The second call on my way was to the Kornakovs. They lived on the second floor of a large house on Arbat Street. The staircase was quite grand and well-kept, though not sumptuous. The striped drugget was held down by highly-polished brass rods, but there were no potted plants or mirrors about. The ballroom with its light, waxed floor which I crossed into the drawing room was as severely cold and orderly; everything shone and appeared solid, though not very new, but there were no paintings, no drapes, no bric-a-brac anywhere in sight. Several of the young princesses were in the drawing room. They sat in such demure and idle attitudes that it was quite obvious they did not sit thus when there were no callers.

"Mamma will be here directly," said the eldest one, taking a seat beside me. For the next quarter of an hour this princess entertained me so effortlessly and so adroitly that the conversation never flagged for a moment. However, it was too evident that she was entertaining me, and so I did not like her. She told me, in passing, that their brother Stepan, whom they called *Etienne* and who had been sent to a military school some two years before, had already received his commission. When she spoke about her brother, and especially about his having joined the hussars against their mother's wishes, she put on a frightened expression, and all the younger princesses who were sitting there silently put on frightened expressions, too. When she spoke of my grandmother's death she put on a sad expression, and all the younger princesses did, too; when she recalled the time I had struck St.-Jérôme and had been led out of the room she laughed and showed her bad teeth, and all the princesses laughed and showed their bad teeth.

Princess Kornakova, their mother, entered. She was still the same small, slim woman with restless eyes and a habit of glancing at others while speaking to you. She took my hand and raised her own to my lips for me to kiss, some-

thing I should otherwise never have done, not thinking that it was necessary.

"How happy I am to see you," she said with her usual volubility, glancing around at her daughters. "Ah, how he resembles his mamma. Does he not, Lise?"

Lise said it was true, though I knew for a fact that I did not in the least resemble my mother.

"My, you certainly have grown up! And my Etienne, you remember him, of course, he is your second cousin ... no, not your second cousin, but ... what is he, Lise? My mother, Varvara Dmitryevna, was Dmitry Nikolayevich's daughter, and your grandmother was his sister."

"Then he is a third cousin, Mamma," said the eldest princess.

"Oh, you always confuse things!" her mother snapped. "He is not at all a third cousin, but *issues de germains*,[1] that is what you and my dear Etienne are. He is an officer now, you know. Too bad, though, that he should be at liberty to do as he pleases. You young people must be kept well in hand, indeed! Don't be cross at your old aunt for speaking frankly; I brought Etienne up strictly and believe that this is correct. Yes, so this is how we are kin," she continued. "Prince Ivan Ivanovich is my uncle, and he was your mother's uncle, too. That means your mother and I were first cousins, no second cousins, yes, that is what. And now tell me, have you been to call on Prince Ivan, my dear?"

I said that I had not yet been, but was going to that same day.

"Oh, but how could you!" she exclaimed. "Your first call should have been to him. You know that Prince Ivan is like a father to you. He has no children, which means that you and my children are his heirs. You must honor him for his age, his position in society and in every other respect. I know you young people of today no longer count kinship for anything and do not care for old people; but listen to me, your old aunt, because I am fond of you, and I loved your mamma, and your grandmother also, I loved her very, very much and truly esteemed

[1] A second cousin once removed.

her... Yes, you must certainly, certainly go."

I replied that I should certainly go, and as I thought my visit had lasted long enough, I rose to leave, but she detained me.

"No, wait a moment. Where is your father, Lise? Ask him to come here; he will be so pleased to see you," she added, turning to me.

Some minutes later Prince Mikhailo did, indeed, enter. He was a short, thickset man, most slovenly in his dress, unshaven and with such a stolid expression on his face as to seem almost stupid. He was not at all pleased to see me, at any rate, he did not express his pleasure. But the princess, whom he seemed to fear greatly, said to him:

"Do you not find that Woldemar (she had evidently forgotten my name) resembles his mamma?" and she motioned to him with her eyes in such a way that the prince, apparently guessing what she meant, approached me and with a most apathetic and even resentful expression offered me his unshaven cheek to kiss.

"But you are not dressed yet, and you ought to be leaving soon," the princess said to him immediately afterwards in an angry tone of voice which she was seemingly in the habit of using to her family. "Do you want them to be angry at you again? Do you want to set them against you again?"

"Yes, yes, I'm going, Mother," said Prince Mikhailo and left the room. I said goodbye and also left.

This was the first I had heard of us being Prince Ivan Ivanovich's heirs, and the news struck me unpleasantly.

Chapter 20

THE IVINS

I found it even more disagreeable to think of the forthcoming unavoidable call. But before calling on the prince I had first to call on the Ivins on my way. They lived on Tverskaya Street in a large, handsome house.

Rather timidly, I climbed the steps to the front entrance, where a doorkeeper stood armed with a mace.

I asked him whether anyone was at home.

"Who d'you wish to see? The general's son is in," the doorkeeper said to me.

"And the general?" I ventured bravely.

"You'll have to be announced. Who do I say is calling?" said the doorkeeper and rang. The gaitered legs of a footman appeared on the stairs. I quailed so, I know not why, that I told him not to announce me to the general, since I would first go up to see the general's son. As I ascended the broad staircase I felt as though I had become terribly small (and not in a figurative, but in the literal sense of the word). I had experienced the same sensation when my droshky had drawn up to the large main entrance: it had seemed to me that the droshky and the horse, and the driver had all shrunk in size. The general's son lay asleep on the sofa with an opened book before him when I entered his room. His tutor, Herr Frost, who was still with them, followed me into the room with his usual jaunty step and awakened his charge. Ivin did not evince any particular joy at the sight of me, and I noticed that while speaking to me his eyes remained fixed on my eyebrows. Though he was very polite, I felt that he was entertaining me just as the princess had done, and that he felt no particular attachment for me, nor was he in any need of my acquaintance, since he no doubt had his own circle of friends. All this I conjectured chiefly from the way he stared at my eyebrows. In short, his attitude towards me was, unpleasant as it is to admit it, much the same as mine was towards Ilenka. I was beginning to feel irked, intercepted Ivin's every glance, and when his eyes met Frost's I interpreted it as meaning: "What in the world has he come here for?"

After talking to me for a few minutes, Ivin said that his parents were at home and asked whether I cared to go down with him and see them.

"I will change first," he added, going into an adjoining room, though he was quite well-dressed in a new frock-coat and a white waistcoat. A few moments later he reappeared in his University uniform, buttoned up to the chin,

and we went downstairs together. The reception rooms through which we passed were extremely large, high-ceilinged and, I thought, luxuriously furnished, with marble and gilding, and some objects swathed in muslin, and mirrors. Just as we entered the small room beyond the drawing room, Ivin's mother came in through another door. She greeted me very warmly and as true kin, sat me down beside her and questioned me with interest about the family.

Madame Ivina, whom I had barely glimpsed on several previous occasions but could now examine closely, made a most agreeable impression upon me. She was unusually tall, thin and very pale, and seemed perpetually sad and wan. Her smile was melancholy, but extremely kind; there was a slight cast in her large, weary eyes which imparted to her a more doleful expression, yet somehow enhanced her charm. She did not stoop, but sat rather with her entire body slumped over, and all her movements were drooping. She spoke languidly, and her voice and enunciation, a slurring of her *r's* and *l's*, were very pleasing. She did not try to entertain me, and apparently found a melancholy interest in my replies about my family, as though, while listening to me, she sadly recalled happier days. Her son left the room, and for a few moments she gazed at me in silence and then suddenly burst into tears. I sat there beside her and could not for the life of me decide what I should do or say. She went on weeping, with her head averted from me. At first, I felt sorry for her; then I thought: "Should I, perhaps, try to comfort her, and if so, how should I do it?" And at last, I became vexed that she should place me in such an awkward situation. "Do I really look so pathetic?" I wondered. "Or is she doing this on purpose, to see how I shall behave?"

"It will be awkward to leave now, as though I were escaping from her tears," was my next thought. I shifted in my chair to at least remind her of my presence.

"Oh, how silly of me!" she said, glancing at me and attempting a smile. "There are days when one weeps without cause."

She fumbled for the handkerchief beside her on the sofa and suddenly broke into more violent tears.

"Oh, my goodness! How ridiculous of me to go on like this. I loved your mother so, we were such good ... friends ... and ..."

She found her handkerchief, buried her face in it and continued to cry. I again felt abashed and continued to feel so for quite some time. I was both vexed and even more sorry for her. Her tears seemed genuine, yet I kept thinking that she was not crying so much over my mother's death as because she herself was unhappy now, though once, in bygone days, she had been much happier. I do not know how it would have ended, had young Ivin not returned to say that his father wanted to see her. She rose and was about to leave when the elder Ivin came into the room. He was a short, stocky man whose hair was quite gray and cropped, with bushy black eyebrows and an austere and firm set to his mouth.

I rose and bowed to him, but Ivin, who had three decorations on his green dress-coat, not only did not return my greeting, but scarcely even glanced at me, which suddenly made me feel that I was not a human being at all, but some insignificant object that was not worth one's attention: an armchair or a window, or that if I were a human being, then I was indistinguishable from an armchair or a window.

"But you have not yet written to the countess, my dear," he said to his wife in French with an impassive yet rigid expression.

"Goodbye, *Monsieur Irteneff*," Madame Ivina said to me with a sudden proud toss of her head and, like her son, stared at my eyebrows. I bowed again to her and to her husband, and once again my bow had no more effect on the elder Ivin than the opening or shutting of a window might have had. Ivin, the student, however, saw me to the door and told me on the way that he was being transferred to St. Petersburg University, as his father had received an appointment there (he mentioned some very important post).

"No matter what Papa says," I muttered to myself as I climbed into my droshky, "I will never set foot here again; that mope weeps when she looks at me, as though I were some sort of miserable wretch, while that swine

Ivin does not acknowledge my bow; I'll show him ..." I certainly do not know how I intended to show him, but the remark just came to mind.

I often afterwards had to stand up to the exhortations of my father, who said that it was essential to cultivate this acquaintance and that I could not expect a man of Ivin's position to take note of a boy like me; but I stood my ground for quite some time.

Chapter 21

PRINCE IVAN IVANOVICH

"Well, now there's one last call on Nikitskaya Street," I said to Kuzma, and we drove off to Prince Ivan Ivanovich's house.

Having surmounted the ordeal of a round of calls, I usually gained a measure of self-confidence, so that now, driving up to the prince's house, I was in a fairly composed state of mind, when I suddenly recalled Princess Kornakova's remark that I was an heir; moreover, I spied two carriages at the entrance, and my former timidity returned.

It seemed to me that the old doorkeeper who opened the door to me, and the footman who helped me off with my greatcoat, and the three ladies and two gentlemen whom I found in the drawing room, and particularly Prince Ivan Ivanovich himself, who sat on the sofa in civilian dress – it seemed to me that they all regarded me as an heir and, consequently, eyed me with ill-will. The prince was very affable towards me, kissed me – that is, his soft, dry, cold lips touched my cheek for an instant – inquired about my occupations and plans, asked in a bantering tone whether I still wrote verses like those I had composed for Grandmother's birthday, and said I should return to dine with him that very day. But the more gracious he was, the more it seemed to me that he wished to show his affection towards me for one reason only: so as not to let me see how disagreeable he found the idea that

I was his heir. He was in the habit, occasioned by a mouthful of false teeth, of raising his upper lip towards his nose after speaking and emitting a slight sniffing sound, as though trying to draw the lip into his nostrils; and whenever he now did this I kept imagining that he was saying to himself: "Yes, my boy, I know without being told: you are my heir, my heir", and so on.

When we were children we used to call Prince Ivan Ivanovich "Grandfather", but now in my capacity of heir I could not bring myself to address him thus, yet to call him "Your Excellency", as did one of the gentlemen present, seemed to me humiliating, so that all during the conversation I tried to avoid addressing him in any way. However, I was made most uncomfortable by the old princess who lived in his house and who was also one of his heirs. All during dinner, at which I sat beside her, I imagined that the princess did not speak to me because she hated me for being an heir of the prince's like herself, and that the prince paid no attention to our end of the table because the princess and I, both his heirs, were equally distasteful to him.

"You would not believe how disagreeable it was," I told Dmitry that very evening, wanting to boast to him of my aversion to the very idea of being an heir (I believed that this was a most laudible sentiment), "and how dreadful it was to have had to spend two whole hours at the prince's today. He is a fine man and was very affable towards me," I added, wishing, by the way, to convince my friend that I was not saying all this because I had been humiliated by the prince, "but," I continued, "the very idea that people might look on me as they do on the princess, who lives in his house and fawns on him, is a horrible thought. He is a splendid old man and extremely amiable, and considerate towards all, but it is painful to see how he maltreats the princess. Money is a detestable thing that spoils every kind of relation. You know, I think it would be best to have it out with the prince," I said, "to tell him that I esteem him as a man, but do not count on his fortune and ask him not to leave me anything, and to say that only on this condition will I continue to visit him."

Dmitry did not burst out laughing when I told him this; on the contrary, he became thoughtful, and after a while he said:

"Do you know what? You are wrong. You must either not assume that others might think of you as they do of that princess of yours, or, if you do assume this, then go on assuming it, that is, that you know what others may be thinking of you, but that such thoughts are so foreign to your nature that you despise them and would never do anything about them. You should assume that they assume that you assume that... In a word," he added, feeling that he was becoming entangled in his argument, "it is best not to assume it at all."

My friend was perfectly right; but only much, much later did experience teach me how harmful it is to think, and even more so to give voice to much that appears very lofty, but which must forever remain hidden from all in the heart of each man; and how seldom noble speeches go with noble deeds. I am convinced that once a good intention is put into words it is difficult and, for the most part, impossible to carry out this good intention. But how can one refrain from giving vent to the lofty and complacent impulses of youth? Only much later does one recall them and regret them, as one regrets a flower which one has heedlessly plucked, while still a bud, and then seen lying on the ground, wilted and trampled underfoot.

Before leaving for the country the very next morning, on finding that I had squandered all my money on pictures and pipe bowls, I, who had been telling my friend Dmitry that money spoils all human relations, borrowed twenty-five rubles in notes from him, which he offered to lend me for the journey, and long remained in his debt.

Chapter 22

SHARING CONFIDENCES WITH MY FRIEND

This talk took place in the phaeton on the way to Kuntsevo. Dmitry had dissuaded me from calling on his mother in the morning, but had stopped by for me after

dinner to take me to spend the whole evening, and perhaps even stay the night, at the summer house where his family was living. Only after we had left the city with its dirty, motley streets, and exchanged the intolerable, deafening clatter of the pavements for a sweeping view of fields and the soft crunching of our wheels on the dusty road, and when the fragrant air of spring and broad expanses surrounded me on all sides, then only did I to some extent recover from the many new impressions and the sensation of freedom which had so completely unsettled me during the last two days. Dmitry was sociable and affectionate and did not jerk his head to adjust his cravat or blink nervously, or squint; I was satisfied with the noble sentiments which I had expressed to him, supposing that now that he had them in mind he could excuse my shameful encounter with Kolpikov and would not despise me for it. We spoke amicably about many intimate things which one could not always express to another. Dmitry told me about his family, whose acquaintance I had not yet made, about his mother, his aunt, his sister and the one whom Volodya and Dubkov regarded as my friend's lady love and referred to as his *redhead*. He spoke of his mother with a rather cold and formal commendation, as though to preclude any rejoinder on the matter; he spoke of his aunt with admiration, yet with a touch of condescension; he said very little about his sister and seemed too shy to speak to me of her; but of his *redhead*, whose real name was Lyubov Sergeyevna and who was a middle-aged spinster living with the Nekhlyudovs, he spoke with fervor.

"Yes, she is an amazing woman," he said, blushing shyly, but looking all the more boldly into my eyes. "She is not a young girl. I would say she is even old, and not at all pretty, but how stupid, how absurd it is to love beauty! I cannot understand it, it is so stupid (he said this as though he had just discovered a new and remarkable truth), but she has such a soul, such a heart and such high principles ... I am certain you will not find another like her in the world today" (I do not know from whom Dmitry had acquired the habit of saying that there was scarcely anything good to be found in the present world,

but he was fond of repeating the expression, and it rather became him). "However, I am afraid," he continued calmly, having thus quite demolished all those who were silly enough to love beauty, "I am afraid you will not understand and will not come to know her soon: she is modest and even reserved, and is not given to displaying her wonderful, amazing qualities. Now, my mother, who, as you will see, is a splendid, astute woman, has known Lyubov Sergeyevna for years, but still cannot and will not appreciate her. Yesterday I even ... I will tell you why I was in a bad humor when you asked me. The day before yesterday Lyubov Sergeyevna wished me to accompany her to see Ivan Yakovlevich. You must have heard of Ivan Yakovlevich, who is supposed to be insane, but is actually a remarkable man. Lyubov Sergeyevna is extremely devout, I must say, and understands Ivan Yakovlevich perfectly. She often visits him, converses with him and gives him money for the poor, which she earns herself. She is an amazing woman, you will see. At any rate, I accompanied her to Ivan Yakovlevich's and am very grateful to her for having given me the opportunity to see that remarkable man. Yet, my mother refuses to understand this and says it is all superstition. And yesterday, for the first time in my life, my mother and I quarreled, and rather heatedly, too," he concluded, jerking his neck nervously, as though recalling the feeling he had experienced during the argument.

"What do you think? I mean what, when you think of it, what will come of it ... or have you and she not talked of the future and what lies ahead for your love, or friendship?" I asked, wishing to divert him from the painful memory.

"Are you asking whether I intend to marry her?" he said, blushing again, but turning to look me resolutely in the face.

"Well, indeed," I thought, reassuring myself, "it is all right; we are two *grown up* friends, driving in a phaeton and discussing the future. Actually, anyone would enjoy listening in and watching us."

"Why not?" he went on, after I had replied in the affirmative. "After all, it is my aim, as it is of any sensible

man, to be happy and estimable, insofar as that is possible; and with her, if she only desires it, when I am entirely independent, I should be a happier and a better man than with the greatest beauty in the world."

Absorbed in such conversation, we did not notice that we were approaching Kuntsevo, nor that the sky had become overcast and was threatening. The sun had sunk low to the right above the old trees of the Kuntsevo park, and one half of its brilliant red disk was shrouded by a gray, slightly-transluscent cloud, while from the other half bursts of fiery rays vividly lit up the dense green crowns of the old trees of the park, gleaming motionless against the still luminous, clear patch of blue sky. The brilliance and light of this stretch of the heavens contrasted sharply with the heavy purple cloud which hung over the young birch copse on the horizon in front of us.

A little to the right, we could already see beyond the trees and shrubs the multicolored roofs of the small summer houses, some of which reflected the lustrous rays of the sun, while others assumed the somber aspect of the other half of the sky. Below, to the left, lay a slate-blue, motionless pond surrounded by pale-green willows which were darkly reflected on its opaque and seemingly convex surface. On the rising ground beyond the pond stretched a dark, fallow field and the straight line of the bright-green boundary which ran across it disappeared in the distance, losing itself in the threatening, leaden horizon. On either side of the soft road along which our phaeton rolled, swaying measuredly, succulent rye which here and there was beginning to form stalks shone intensely green. The air was perfectly still and fragrantly fresh; the foliage of the trees, of the leaves and the rye was motionless and remarkably pure and bright. It seemed that every leaf and every blade of grass was living its own busy, happy life. Beside the road I noticed a dark path winding through the dark-green rye, which was here more than a quarter grown, and this path somehow vividly reminded me of the country at home, and by some strange sequence of thought that memory vividly reminded me of Sonichka, and of my being in love with her.

In spite of my genuine friendship for Dmitry and the pleasure his frankness afforded me, I did not wish to know any more of his feelings and intentions towards Lyubov Sergeyevna, but was anxious to tell him of my love for Sonichka, which seemed to me to be of a much loftier order. Yet, for some reason or other I could not bring myself to come straight out with my ideas of how splendid it would be when I had married Sonichka, and we should be living in the country, and I should have little children who toddled about and called me "Papa", and of how delighted I should be when he and his wife, Lyubov Sergeyevna, dressed in travelling clothes, came visiting ... but instead of all this I remarked, pointing to the setting sun: "See how beautiful it is, Dmitry!"

Dmitry said nothing to me, apparently disappointed that in response to his confession, which had no doubt been quite an effort, I drew his attention to nature, towards which he was more or less indifferent. Nature affected him quite unlike it affected me: it affected him not so much by its beauty as by the interest it aroused; he loved it with his mind rather than with his heart.

"I am very happy," I went on unconcernedly, though he was obviously occupied by thoughts of his own and thus quite unmindful of what I might say to him. "Remember, I told you about a young lady with whom I was in love as a child; I saw her today," I continued eagerly, "and now I am definitely in love with her ..."

And despite the lack of interest which his face continued to express, I told him of my love and of my plans for future married bliss. And, strangely, no sooner had I described in detail the force of my love than I felt that this feeling was beginning to diminish.

A light shower overtook us just as we turned into the birch alley leading to the summer house, but we did not get wet. I only knew it was raining because a few drops fell on my nose and hand, and something began pattering on the young, sticky leaves of the birch trees which, trailing their leafy, motionless branches, welcomed these clear, transparent drops, their pleasure expressed by the fragrance with which they filled the alley. We got out of the carriage to run across the garden to the house and at the

very entrance encountered four ladies, two with needlework, one with a book and another with a lapdog, all hurrying in from another direction. Dmitry at once introduced me to his mother, his sister, his aunt and Lyubov Sergeyevna. They stopped for an instant, but, the rain coming down harder, the one whom I took to be Dmitry's mother said, "Let us go up to the veranda. You shall introduce him to us again there", and we ascended the steps together with the ladies.

Chapter 23

THE NEKHLYUDOVS

Of the whole company, I was at first most struck by Lyubov Sergeyevna, who, in heavy knitted slippers and carrying the lapdog, ascended the steps behind the rest, stopping once or twice to turn back and look at me intently and then immediately kiss her dog. She was very plain: redheaded, thin, short and with one hip somewhat higher than the other. What made her plain face even more unattractive was the peculiar way her hair was done, with the parting on one side (one of those coiffeurs that balding women devise for themselves). Try as I did in deference to my friend, I could not discover a single handsome feature in her. Even her brown eyes, though they expressed kindness, were too small and dull, and decidedly unattractive, while her hands, this most revealing feature, though small and well-shaped, were red and rough.

When I followed them up to the veranda each of the ladies except Dmitry's sister Varenka, who merely fixed her large, dark-gray eyes on me, addressed a few words to me before taking up their work again, while Varenka began to read aloud from the book which she held in her lap with her finger between the pages.

Princess Maria Ivanovna was a tall, stately woman of about forty. She might have been thought older, to judge by the graying locks that were frankly displayed beneath

her cap, but her smooth, extremely delicate complexion with hardly a wrinkle, and particularly the lively, merry sparkle of her large eyes, made her appear much younger. Her eyes were brown and earnest; her lips were too thin and rather severe; her nose was regular, but slightly turned to the left; her hands bore no rings, were large and almost masculine, with fine, tapering fingers. She had on a dark-blue, high-necked dress snugly fitting her slim, still youthful waist which she evidently liked to show off. She sat up very straight and was sewing some garment. When I entered the veranda she took my hand and drew me towards her, as though intending to scrutinize me, and said, after gazing at me with a rather cool, frank expression like her son's, that Dmitry had often spoken about me, and to become better acquainted she hoped I would spend the night and the following day with them.

"Do whatever you like and do not trouble about us, just as we shall not stand on ceremony with you. Go for walks, read, listen to us reading or sleep, whatever will make you happy," she added.

Sofia Ivanovna, a maiden lady, was the princess's younger sister, though she looked older than the princess. She had that peculiar over-full figure which is only met with in short, very stout old maids who wear corsets. She looked as though all her robustness had mounted upwards with such force that it threatened to suffocate her at any moment. Her short, plump arms could not meet below the curved, tightly-stretched point of her bodice, and she could no longer see that point.

Although Princess Maria Ivanovna was dark-haired and dark-eyed, while Sofia Ivanovna was fair and had large, vivacious and, at the same time (what is a great rarity), serene blue eyes, there was a strong family resemblance between the sisters: the same expression, the same nose, and the same lips, though Sofia Ivanovna's nose and lips were slightly thicker and slightly drawn to the right when she smiled, whereas the princess's were drawn to the left. Sofia Ivanovna, judging by her dress and the way she did her hair, still apparently hoped to look young and would not have displayed gray locks had she had any. Her glance and attitude towards me had seemed to me very

haughty at first and had made me feel shy, whereas with the princess I felt completely at ease. Perhaps her stoutness and a certain resemblance which I found in her to the portrait of Catherine the Great made me imagine her to be haughty; at any rate, I was quite abashed when, fixing her eyes on me intently, she said: "The friends of our friends are our friends." I only recovered and suddenly changed my opinion of her completely when, after uttering these words, she fell silent, opened her mouth and heaved a deep sigh. Her corpulence probably occasioned this habit of sighing deeply after every few words and of parting her lips a bit and slightly rolling her large blue eyes. This habit somehow expressed such sweet goodness that after that sigh I lost all my apprehension and even took a great liking to her. Sofia Ivanovna's eyes were lovely, her voice melodious and pleasant, and even the extreme rotundity of her figure did not seem to me at that period of my youth wholly bereft of beauty.

Lyubov Sergeyevna, as a friend of my friend (I assumed), should have at once said something very amicable and sincere to me, and she did look at me for some time in silence, as though undecided whether what she intended to say to me would not be too familiar; but she broke this silence only to ask me in what faculty I was. Then she once again stared at me for quite a while, apparently deliberating whether or not to express these sincere and friendly words; and I, noticing this hesitation, mutely entreated her with my eyes to speak freely, but she merely remarked: "They say that they do not place much importance on the sciences at the University nowadays", and then called to her dog Suzette.

All that evening Lyubov Sergeyevna spoke in similar unconnected sentences, but I trusted Dmitry so implicitly, and all through the evening he looked now at me, now at her with such concern, and his eyes seemed to be asking: "Well? What do you think of her?" that I, as is often the case, though in my heart quite convinced that there was nothing remarkable about Lyubov Sergeyevna, was still very far from formulating this thought even to myself.

Finally, the one remaining member of the family, Varenka, was a buxom girl of about sixteen.

Her only good features were her large, dark-gray eyes which, expressing both merriment and quiet thoughtfulness, were exceedingly like her aunt's, a long, honey-colored braid and exceptionally delicate and lovely hands.

"I expect you must find it dull, *Monsieur Nicolas*, to listen in at the middle," Sofia Ivanovna said to me with her kindly sigh, turning over the pieces of a garment she was making.

The reading had stopped just then because Dmitry had left the veranda.

"Or have you perhaps read *Rob Roy*?"

At the time I considered it incumbent on me, if for no other reason than because I wore a student's uniform, to offer, when conversing with people whom I knew but slightly, to each, even the simplest of questions, a reply that would unfailingly be most *clever and original* and considered short, concise replies such as: yes, no, it is dull, it is amusing, and so on, to be exceedingly disgraceful. With a glance at my fashionable new pantaloons and at the shiny buttons of my frock-coat, I replied that I had not read *Rob Roy*, but that I found it very interesting to listen to the reading, since I preferred to read books from the middle rather than from the beginning.

"It is twice as interesting: one must guess what has gone on before and what will follow," I added, smiling smugly.

The princess laughed in a way that seemed to me unnatural (I later noticed that she never laughed in any other way).

"Well, it is probably true," she said. "And shall you be with us for long, *Nicolas*? I hope you will not be offended if I do not call you *monsieur*? When will you be leaving?"

"I don't know. Perhaps tomorrow, but we may be staying some time," I replied for some reason or other, though we were definitely leaving on the morrow.

"I should like you to stay, both on your account and for Dmitry's sake," the princess remarked, looking off into the distance. "At your age friendship is a splendid thing."

I felt that everyone was looking at me and waiting to hear what I should say, though Varenka pretended to be

examining her aunt's work; I felt that I was being put to a test of sorts and that I must show myself to the best advantage.

"Yes," I said, "as far as I am concerned, Dmitry's friendship is a great help to me, but mine cannot be of much use to him: he is a thousand times better than I." (Dmitry could not hear me, or I should have feared that he would sense the insincerity of my words.)

The princess again laughed the unnatural laugh that was natural to her.

"To hear him talk," she said, "then *c'est vous qui êtes un petit monstre de perfection*." [1]

"*Monstre de perfection*. That is excellent. I must remember it," I said to myself.

"However, apart from you, he is a past master at it," she continued, lowering her voice (which was particularly flattering to me) and indicating Lyubov Sergeyevna with her eyes. "He has discovered in *poor auntie*" (as they called Lyubov Sergeyevna among themselves), "whom I have known these twenty years, and her Suzette as well, such merits as I had never suspected ... Varenka, tell someone to bring me a glass of water," she added, gazing off into space again and evidently deciding that it was still too soon or altogether unnecessary to initiate me into their family affairs. "Never mind, let *him* go. *He* is not doing anything. And you go on reading. Go, my dear, straight through the door and about fifteen paces down the passage. Stop and call out loudly: 'Pyotr, bring Maria Ivanovna a glass of iced water,'" she said to me and again laughed in her unnatural way.

"She no doubt intends to speak about me," I said to myself as I left the veranda. "She no doubt wants to say that she has noticed that I am a very, very clever young man." I had not gone the fifteen paces before the stout Sofia Ivanovna, panting, though her steps were quick and light, overtook me.

"*Merci, mon cher*," she said. "I am going there, so I shall tell him myself."

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[1] It is you who are a little monster of perfection.

Chapter 24

LOVE

Sofia Ivanovna, as I was later to discover, was one of those rare middle-aged women who are born to family life, but to whom fate has denied this happiness and who, in consequence of this denial, suddenly decide to expend on some chosen few the entire store of love intended for husband and children which has for so long been cherished and nurtured in their hearts. And in maiden ladies of this kind this store is sometimes so inexhaustible that though there may be many chosen ones, there still remains an abundance of love which they lavish on all those, both good and bad, whom they chance to meet in their lives.

There are three kinds of love:

1) Beautiful love,
2) Self-denying love and
3) Active love.

I do not speak of the love of a young man for a young girl, or vice versa. I fear such sentimentality and have been so unfortunate in life as never to have seen in this type of love a single spark of veracity, but only untruth, in which sensuality, marital relations, money and a wish to bind or emancipate oneself have so confused the feeling itself as to make it impossible to understand a thing. I speak of that love for another which, according to the greater or lesser powers of the heart, is concentrated upon one or several individuals, or is expended on many: of love for one's mother, father, brother, children, friend or compatriot, of love for one's fellow creatures.

Beautiful love is love for the beauty of the sentiment itself and its expression. For those who love thus, the love object is dear only insofar as it inspires that pleasant feeling, the consciousness and expression of which they enjoy. Those whose love is beautiful love are scarcely at all concerned about reciprocity, it being a circumstance that has no effect on the beauty and the charm of their sentiment. They frequently change the object of their love, as their principal aim is that the pleasant feeling of loving

should be continually excited. To maintain this pleasant sensation they never cease speaking of their love, and in the most exquisite terms, both to the adored one and to others, who have not the slightest interest in this love. In our country people of a certain class who love *beautifully* not only tell everyone of their love, but are sure to speak of it in French. It may seem absurd and strange to say this, but I am convinced that there have been and still are many people of a certain class of society, particularly women, whose love for their friends, husbands and children would vanish instantly were they forbidden to speak of it in French.

The second kind of love, *self-denying love*, is love of the process of sacrificing oneself for the adored one, regardless of whether such sacrifice benefits or harms the loved one.

"There is no discomfort I would not endure to prove my devotion *to him* or *to her*, and to the whole world" is the formula for this kind of love. People who love in this way never believe in reciprocity (for it is even more admirable to sacrifice myself for one who does not understand me), and they are always sickly, which further enhances the merit of their sacrifice; they are mostly constant, as they find it difficult to lose the credit of the sacrifices they have already made for their beloved; they are always ready to die to prove *to him* or *to her* the immensity of their devotion, but they neglect the small, everyday demonstrations of love which do not call for any particular bursts of self-sacrifice. They care not whether you ate well, slept well, are happy or are in good health, and they will do nothing to provide these comforts if it lies within their power to do so; but they will face bullets, throw themselves into fire or water and waste away for love, for all this they are always ready, if only the occasion presents itself. Moreover, people who are inclined to self-denying love are always proud of their love, demanding, jealous, distrustful and, oddly enough, wish danger upon their loved ones so that they may rescue them, misfortune, so that they may comfort them, and even welcome vice, so that they may reform them.

Suppose you live alone in your country house with

a wife who loves you self-denyingly. You enjoy good health and peace of mind, you have occupations which you like; your loving wife is so frail that she cannot oversee the household, which has been left to the servants, nor tend to her children, who are in the charge of nannies, nor even devote herself to some occupation she might care for, for she cares for nothing but you. She is *patently* ill, but, not wishing to upset you, does not mention it to you; she is *patently* bored, but for your sake is prepared to endure boredom for the rest of her life; she is *patently* distressed at your taking such an interest in your affairs (whatever they may be: hunting, reading, running the estate, or government service), she sees that these pursuits will be your undoing, yet suffers in silence. But now you are suddenly taken ill. Your loving wife forgets her own ill-health, and though you entreat her not to torment herself needlessly, she never leaves your bedside, so that you continually feel upon yourself her suffering gaze, which says: "See? I told you so. But no matter, I shall not forsake you." In the morning you feel a little better and go into the next room. The room has not been heated, has not been tidied; your broth, the only nourishment you can take, has not been ordered from the kitchen; no one has been sent to fetch your medicine; but your loving wife, worn out by the night's vigil, continues to gaze at you with the same look of commiseration, walks about on tiptoe and in a whisper issues unaccustomed and confusing orders to the servants. You wish to read, and your loving wife tells you with a sigh that she knows you will not take her advice and will be cross at her, but that she is used to this, and that you had best not read; you wish to walk about the room, and she says you had best not do this, either; you wish to talk to a friend who has come to see you, and she says you had best not talk. In the night you are feverish again, and you want to find relief in sleep, but your loving wife, thin and wan, and occasionally heaving a sigh, sits opposite you in an armchair in the dim glimmer of a night light, and her slightest movement, slightest rustle arouse in you a feeling of exasperation. You have a manservant who has been with you for twenty years, to whom you are accustomed and who

would tend to you willingly and well, as he has had his sleep during the day and is paid a salary for his services, but she will not allow him to attend to you. She does everything herself with her own frail, unskilled hands. You cannot help watching with suppressed rage as these pale fingers vainly endeavor to uncork a medicine bottle or snuff out the candle, as they spill the medicine or touch you squeamishly. If you happen to be an impatient, irascible man and ask her to go away, your irritated, overwrought ears hear her sighing meekly outside the door, weeping and whispering some nonsense to your servant. At last, if you do not die, your loving wife who has not slept the three weeks of your illness (as she continually reminds you) falls ill, wastes away, suffers and becomes even less capable of assuming any duties, so that when you have returned to your normal state of health she expresses her self-denying love only by meek apathy, which unwittingly communicates itself to you and to everyone about her.

The third kind, *active love*, is an attempt to satisfy every need, every desire, whim and even vice of the beloved. Those who love thus always love for a lifetime, for the longer they love, the better they know the loved one and the easier it becomes to love, that is, to satisfy all of his or her desires. Their love rarely expresses itself in words, and when expressed, far from being conceited and beautiful, is timid and awkward, as they are always afraid they do not love enough. Such people love even the faults of their beloved, as these faults furnish them with opportunities for satisfying fresh desires. They long for reciprocity, believe in it, even readily deceive themselves and are happy if they find it; but they go on loving just as strongly even though their feelings are not reciprocated, and not only desire the loved one's happiness, but strive to promote it by all moral and material means, both great and small, within their power.

It was this kind of active love for her nephew, her niece, her sister, for Lyubov Sergeyevna, and even for me, because Dmitry was fond of me, that shone in Sofia Ivanovna's eyes, in her every word and gesture.

Only much later was I fully to appreciate Sofia

Ivanovna, yet even at this time it occurred to me to wonder why Dmitry, who tried to understand love in a way quite different from other young men and who had dear, loving Sofia Ivanovna always before his eyes, suddenly fell passionately in love with the incomprehensible Lyubov Sergeyevna and at most acknowledged that his aunt also possessed some good qualities. No doubt there is truth in the saying: "No man is a prophet in his own land." It is either one or the other: either there is indeed more bad than good in a person, or we are more susceptible to the bad than to the good. Dmitry had known Lyubov Sergeyevna only a short time, but had enjoyed his aunt's love from the day he was born.

Chapter 25

I BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED

When I returned to the veranda they were not talking about me at all, as I had anticipated, and Varenka was not reading. She had laid her book aside and was arguing heatedly with Dmitry, who was pacing up and down, jerking his neck and blinking. The ostensible subject of their dispute was Ivan Yakovlevich and superstition, but the dispute was too heated for its underlying meaning not to be something else, more important to the whole family. The princess and Lyubov Sergeyevna sat silently listening to every word, apparently tempted at times to take part in the debate, but restraining themselves and allowing the others to speak for them: Varenka for the one and Dmitry for the other. When I entered Varenka glanced at me with an expression of such indifference that it was obvious that she was wholly engrossed in the argument and did not care whether I heard what she said or not. The princess, who was evidently on Varenka's side, cast a similar look at me. But Dmitry began arguing even more passionately in my presence, while Lyubov Sergeyevna seemed rather alarmed by my entrance and remarked, addressing no one in particular:

"Old people are quite right when they say: '*si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait.*'[1]"

However, this dictum did not put an end to the dispute, but only made me think that Lyubov Sergeyevna and my friend were in the wrong. Though I felt rather uncomfortable at being present at a family controversy, I was, however, pleased to see the real relations of this household emerge in the argument and to feel that my presence did not prevent them from speaking their minds.

How often you see a family under the same veil of false propriety for years, while the true relations of its members remain a mystery to you (I have even noticed that the more impenetrable and, therefore, the more decorous the veil, the nastier are the true and hidden relations). But it may chance to happen one day that an apparently insignificant question will suddenly be raised in this family circle: about a bit of blond-lace, or a visit in the husband's carriage, and for no apparent reason the argument grows more and more vehement; there is no longer sufficient room under the veil for the question to be examined, and all of a sudden, to the horror of the disputants and the astonishment of those present, all the true hostility of their relations comes to the fore, and the veil, now no longer concealing anything, flaps idly between the contending parties and serves only to remind you of how long you were deceived by it. It is often less painful to strike your head full force against a lintel than to just barely touch a sore and sensitive spot. And such a sore and sensitive spot is to be found in most families. In the Nekhlyudov family this sore spot was Dmitry's strange love for Lyubov Sergeyevna which excited in his sister and mother if not a feeling of jealousy, then at least one of wounded family pride. That was why the difference of opinion about Ivan Yakovlevich and superstition was of such importance to them all.

"You always try to see something particularly good in what other people laugh at and scorn," Varenka was saying in her musical voice, enunciating every letter clearly.

[1] If youth but knew, if age but could.

"In the first place, only an *unthinking person* can speak of despising such a remarkable man as Ivan Yakovlevich," Dmitry retorted, nervously jerking his head in a direction away from his sister, "and, secondly, it is *you* who deliberately refuse to see the good that is before your eyes."

After rejoining us, Sofia Ivanovna glanced anxiously several times now at her nephew, now at her niece, and then at me, and once or twice opened her mouth and heaved a deep sigh, as though she had said something to herself.

"Do go on reading, Varenka," she said, handing her the book and patting her arm affectionately. "I must know whether he found her again." (I do not believe that any mention was made in the novel of someone finding anyone.) "And you, Dmitry, had better tie up your cheek again, my dear, for it is growing chilly and you might have a toothache again," she said to her nephew, ignoring the cross look he gave her, presumably because she had interrupted his logical train of thought. The reading was resumed.

This minor dispute did not at all upset the tranquility or the sensible concord which reigned in this small feminine circle.

Evidently deriving its tone and direction from Princess Maria Ivanovna, this circle had for me an entirely novel fascination by being somehow very logical, yet artless and refined. All this I perceived in the beauty, the neatness and the solidity of everything: in the little bell, the book binding, the armchair, the table; in the erect, tightly-laced figure of the princess, in her unconcealed gray locks and in her manner of calling me at our very first meeting simply *Nicolas* and *he*, in their occupations, their reading and their sewing, and in the unusual whiteness of the ladies' hands. (They all shared a common family feature: the flesh of the palm being pink and sharply divided by a straight line from the extreme whiteness of the back of the hand.) But the nature of this circle was best expressed in the excellent Russian and French all three spoke, enunciating each letter, completing each word and sentence with pedantic accuracy. Because of all this, and in particu-

lar because they treated me as simply and seriously as a grown-up, telling me their own and listening to my opinions (something I was so little accustomed to that in spite of my shiny buttons and light-blue stitching I was constantly afraid I should suddenly be told: "Do you really suppose you are being talked to seriously? Run along to your lessons"), I did not feel in the least shy in their company. I stood up, changed my seat and spoke freely to everyone except Varenka, to whom I felt it was as yet improper and for some reason not permissible to speak at this first meeting.

During the reading, listening to her pleasant, melodious voice, glancing now at her, now at the sanded path of the flower garden, where the rain was making round, dark spots, and at the lindens, on whose leaves infrequent drops of rain continued to splash from the thin edge of the cloud which had overtaken us and through which the blue sky was now visible, then at her again, then at the last crimson rays of the setting sun which lit up the rain-drenched, branching old birches, and again at Varenka - I decided that she was not at all as plain as she had seemed to me at first.

"What a pity that I am already in love," I said to myself, "and that Varenka is not Sonichka; how good it would be suddenly to become a member of this family: I should gain a mother, and an aunt, and a wife." While I was thinking this, I stared fixedly at Varenka as she read and imagined that I was hypnotizing her, and that she would have to look up at me. Indeed, Varenka raised her head from the book, looked at me and, meeting my eyes, turned away.

"It is still raining," she said.

And suddenly I experienced a strange feeling: I imagined that all that was now happening to me was a repetition of what had occurred once before: then, too, it had been drizzling like this, and the sun was setting behind the birch trees, and I had gazed at *her*, and she had been reading, and I had hypnotized her, and she had looked up, and I had even recalled that all this had happened before.

"Can this be ... *she*?" I wondered. "Is it really *begin-*

ning?" But I soon decided that this was not *she* and that it was not yet beginning. "In the first place, she is not pretty," I said to myself, "and she is just a girl whose acquaintance I have made in the most ordinary way, but *she* will be most extraordinary, and I shall meet her in some extraordinary place; and then, the one reason why I like this family so much is because I have not seen anything yet," I reflected, "and there must no doubt be such people everywhere, and I shall come across very many of them in my lifetime."

Chapter 26

I PUT MY BEST FOOT FORWARD

At teatime the reading was interrupted, and the ladies began talking among themselves about people and events I was not acquainted with and, as I imagined, expressly to give me to understand, in spite of the friendly welcome I had received, the difference in age and social position which existed between them and myself. But when the conversation became general and I could participate in it, to make up for my previous silence, I tried to show my exceptional cleverness and originality, which I felt my uniform demanded of me. When the conversation turned to summer houses I suddenly remarked that Prince Ivan Ivanovich had a country house near Moscow, that people came to see it from London and from Paris, that it had a railing which had cost three hundred and eighty thousand rubles, that Prince Ivan Ivanovich was a very close relation of mine, that I had dined with him earlier in the day, and that he had expressly asked me to spend the whole summer with him in his country house, but that I had refused, since I knew the estate well, having been there a number of times, and that railings and bridges and suchlike did not interest me, for I could not bear luxury, particularly in the country, but liked the country to be as the country should be ... Having brought forth this frightful, involved lie, I grew confused and blushed, so that

everyone must have realized I was lying. Varenka, who was just then handing me a cup of tea, and Sofia Ivanovna, who had been looking at me as I spoke, both turned away and began speaking of something else with expressions which I subsequently encountered on the faces of kind people when a very young man begins to lie flagrantly and which implied: "We know he is lying, but why is he doing it, poor boy?"

I had mentioned Prince Ivan Ivanovich's country house because I could find no better pretext for informing them that I was related to Prince Ivan Ivanovich and had dined with him that very day; but why I had spoken of a railing which had cost three hundred and eighty thousand rubles and about having visited him so often, when I had never and never could have visited Prince Ivan Ivanovich, who lived only in Moscow or in Naples, as the Nekhlyudovs knew only too well, I simply cannot fathom. Neither in childhood nor in adolescence, nor later, at a more mature age, have I ever detected in myself the vice of falsehood; on the contrary, I have been perhaps too truthful and outspoken; but during this first period of youth there would suddenly, and for no apparent reason, come over me a strange desire to lie most outrageously. I say "most outrageously" advisedly, for I lied about things in which I could easily be caught. I believe that the ambitious desire to appear quite a different person from what I really was, combined with the impossible hope of lying without being detected, were the principal reasons for this peculiar inclination.

After tea, the rain having stopped and the weather at sunset being clear and calm, the princess proposed going for a stroll to the bottom of the garden to see her favorite spot. Acting on my principle of always being original, and believing that intelligent people such as the princess and myself should be above commonplace politeness, I replied that I could not bear walking about aimlessly, and that if I did go walking, I preferred to go alone. I did not realize that this was simply rude; at the time I imagined that just as there was nothing more shameful than insincere compliments, so there was nothing more charming and original than a little impolite frankness. However, pleased as

I was with my reply, I went walking with the others all the same.

The princess's favorite spot was a little bridge across a narrow patch of marsh at the very bottom, in the densest part of the garden. The view was very restricted, but quite pensive and lovely. We are so accustomed to confuse art with nature that often those natural phenomena which we have never encountered in art seem artificial to us, as though Nature herself were unnatural, while those phenomena which have been too frequently repeated in art seem hackneyed to us, and some landscapes which are too closely associated with a single idea and a single sentiment, when encountered in life, seem affected. The view from the princess's favorite spot was of this latter kind. It consisted of a small pond overgrown along its edges; behind it rose a steep hill covered with enormous old trees and bushes whose many-hued foliage was thickly intertwined, and at the foot of the hill an old birch tree that leaned over the pond, its great roots clinging to the damp bank, its dense crown resting against a tall, graceful aspen and its leafy branches hanging over the smooth surface of the water which reflected the drooping boughs and the surrounding verdure.

"How lovely it is!" said the princess with a nod and addressing no one in particular.

"Yes, it is beautiful, but it seems to me very like painted scenery," said I, wishing to show them that I had my own opinion about everything.

The princess continued to admire the view, as though oblivious to my remark, and, turning to her sister and Lyubov Sergeyevna, pointed out various details to them: a twisted, overhanging bough and its reflection, which she found particularly pleasing to the eye. Sofia Ivanovna said that it was all quite lovely and remarked that her sister spent hours on end here, but it was evident that she said this only to please the princess. I have noticed that people endowed with the capacity to love actively are rarely receptive to the beauties of nature. Lyubov Sergeyevna also went into raptures, asking, among other things: "How does the birch remain upright? Will it stand much longer?" and kept an eye on her Suzette, who wagged her

bushy tail and trotted back and forth across the little bridge on her crooked little legs with such a worried look, as though this were the first time in her life she had found herself out of doors. Dmitry began a very logical discussion with his mother about it being impossible for a view with a limited horizon to be beautiful. Varenka said nothing. When I looked back at her she stood in profile to me, leaning on the railing of the bridge and gazing straight ahead. Something seemed to have attracted her attention and even to have affected her deeply, for she was evidently lost in thought and quite oblivious of herself and of being observed. In the expression of her large eyes there was so much steady attention and clear, tranquil thought, in her attitude there was such ease and, although she was quite small in stature, even dignity, that I was again struck by an imagined recollection of her, and I again asked myself: "Is it beginning?" And once again I reminded myself that I was already in love with Sonichka, and that Varenka was merely a young lady, my friend's sister. But at that moment she appealed to me and, in consequence, I felt an insuperable desire to do or to say something mildly irritating to her.

"Do you know, Dmitry," I said to my friend, stepping closer to Varenka so that she might hear what I would say, "I think that even if there were no mosquitoes here, there would be nothing particularly nice about this place, but now," I added, slapping my forehead and actually squashing a mosquito, "it is simply dreadful."

"You are not fond of nature, are you?" Varenka said to me without turning her head.

"I consider it an idle and futile pursuit," I replied, pleased at having said something rather unpleasant to her after all, and something that was original, into the bargain. Varenka, with a look of pity, raised her brows slightly for an instant and then went on gazing straight ahead as serenely as before.

I was annoyed at her, but for all this in later years the gray railing of the little bridge on which she leaned, with its faded paint, the reflection in the dark pond of the overhanging bough, which seemed to wish to join the weeping branches, the smell of the marsh, the awareness

of the squashed mosquito on my forehead, and Varenka's intent gaze and stately attitude were often to unexpectedly recur to my imagination.

Chapter 27

DMITRY

When we returned to the house after our walk Varenka declined to sing, as she generally did in the evenings, and I was conceited enough to attribute her refusal to what I had said to her on the bridge. The Nekhlyudovs did not take supper and retired early, but that day, since Dmitry had indeed a toothache, as Sofia Ivanovna had predicted, we went to his room even earlier than usual. Supposing myself to have been worthy of my blue stitched collar and my buttons, and to have impressed everyone most favorably, I was in a very agreeable and self-satisfied frame of mind; Dmitry, however, because of the dispute and his toothache, was taciturn and glum. He sat down at the writing table, took out his notebooks, a diary and the book in which he was in the habit each evening of making notes about his past and future occupations, and wrote at length, wincing incessantly and touching his fingers to his cheek.

"Oh, do leave me alone!" he shouted at the maid who had been sent by Sofia Ivanovna to ask how his tooth was and whether he would like to apply a hot poultice. Then, telling me that a bed would be made up for me at once and that he would be right back, he went to see Lyubov Sergeyevna.

"What a pity Varenka is not pretty, and that she is not Sonichka, in fact," I mused when I was alone in the room. "How splendid it would be after graduating from the University to come here and propose to her. I would say: "Princess, I am no longer young, I cannot love passionately, but I will always love you like a dear sister." "I already greatly esteem you," I would say to her mother, "and you, Sofia Ivanovna, believe me,

I admire you. So tell me frankly, Varenka, will you marry me?" "Yes." And she would give me her hand, and I would press it and say: "My love is not expressed in words, but in deeds." And what, it occurred to me, if Dmitry were to suddenly fall in love with Lyubochka, who was already in love with him, and what if he should wish to marry her? Then one or the other of us would not by law be allowed to marry. And that would be splendid. This is what I would do. I would take note of this at once, but say nothing. I would go to Dmitry and say: "There is no reason, my friend, for us to conceal anything from one another: you know that my love for your sister will cease only with my last breath; but I know all. You have deprived me of my fondest hope, you have made me wretched, but do you know how Nikolai Irteniev requites his lifelong unhappiness? Here, take my sister", and I would put Lyubochka's hand in his. He would say: "No, not for anything!" and I would say: "Prince Nekhlyudov! It is useless to attempt to be more magnanimous than Nikolai Irteniev. No man on earth is more magnanimous than he." Then I would bow and leave. Dmitry and Lyubochka would run out after me in tears and entreat me to accept their sacrifice. And I might consent and be very, very happy, if only I were in love with Varenka ... These daydreams were so agreeable that I much wished to share them with my friend, but in spite of our vow of mutual confidence, I somehow felt it physically impossible to do so.

Dmitry returned from Lyubov Sergeyevna, who had applied some drops to his tooth, in even greater pain than before and, consequently, even more morose. No bed had yet been made up for me. A boy, Dmitry's servant, came in to ask him where I was to sleep.

"Go to hell!" Dmitry shouted, stamping his foot. "Vaska! Vaska! Vaska!" he shouted as soon as the boy had gone away, raising his voice each time. "Vaska! Make up a bed for me on the floor."

"No, I shall sleep on the floor," said I.

"Well, never mind, make up a bed anywhere," Dmitry continued in the same angry tone of voice. "Vaska! Why aren't you making up the bed?"

But Vaska apparently did not understand what was required of him and stood rooted to the spot.

"Well? Go on! Make up the bed. Vaska! Vaska!" Dmitry shouted, suddenly flying into a rage.

But Vaska, who was frightened and still did not understand, stood motionless.

"Have you sworn to be the death of ... to drive me mad?"

And Dmitry, springing up from his chair, rushed at the boy and struck him on the head several times. Vaska fled from the room. Stopping at the door, Dmitry turned back to look at me. The expression of rage and cruelty of a moment before had been replaced by such a meek, shamefaced, affectionately childlike look that, much as I wished to turn away, I felt sorry for him and could not. He said nothing to me, but silently paced up and down the room for some time, glancing at me occasionally with the same repentant look; then he took one of his notebooks from the table drawer, entered something in it, removed his frock-coat, folded it carefully, went to the corner where an icon hung, clasped his large white hands on his breast and began to pray. He prayed so long that Vaska had time to bring in a mattress and make up a bed on the floor, as I whispered to him to do. I undressed and lay down on the bed that had been made up on the floor, but still Dmitry went on praying. As I gazed at his slightly rounded shoulders and at the soles of his shoes which exposed themselves to me submissively each time he bowed down to the ground, I felt I liked him even more than before and wondered: "Should I or should I not tell him of what I have been thinking about our sisters?" Having finished his prayers, Dmitry lay down beside me on my bed, propped his head on his hand and gazed at me in silence for some time with an affectionate and shamefaced expression. This was evidently quite painful to him, but he seemed to be castigating himself. I smiled as I looked at him. He smiled, too.

"Why don't you tell me," he said, "that I have behaved abominably? I know it is what you were thinking."

"Yes," I replied, for though I had been thinking about something else, it seemed to me that I had indeed been

thinking that. "Indeed, it was not nice at all, and I never expected it of you," I said, feeling a particular pleasure at the moment in speaking familiarly to him. "And how is the toothache?" I added.

"Gone. Oh, Nikolenka, my friend!" Dmitry said so affectionately that I imagined his shining eyes to be filled with tears. "I know and I feel how vile I am, and God sees how I long to be better, and I entreat Him to make me better than I am; but what am I to do if I have such a wretched, foul temper? What am I to do? I try to check myself, to reform, but it cannot be done all of a sudden, and one cannot do it alone. I must have someone to help me, to support me. Now Lyubov Sergeyevna understands me and has helped me greatly in this respect. I can see from my notes that I have improved greatly this last year. Oh, Nikolenka, my friend!" he continued with a peculiar and unaccustomed tenderness and in a calmer tone of voice after this confession. "The influence of such a woman means so much! My Lord, how splendid things will be when I am independent and have such a friend as she! I am a different man entirely when I am with her."

Whereupon Dmitry began to unfold to me his plans for marriage, for life in the country and continuous efforts for self-improvement.

"I will live in the country, you will come to visit me, and perhaps you will be married to Sonichka," he said. "Our children will play together. All this may seem absurd and silly, but it may all come to pass."

"Of course! It very well may," said I, smiling and at the same time thinking that it should be even better, were I to marry his sister.

"Do you know what?" he said to me after a brief pause. "You only imagine that you are in love with Sonichka. As I see it, it is all nonsense, and you do not yet know what real love is."

I did not protest, since I almost agreed with him. We were silent for a while.

"You must have noticed that I was in a bad humor again today and argued shamefully with Varenka. I felt dreadful afterwards, particularly because it all happened in your presence. Though her ideas about many things are

wrong, she is a fine girl, nonetheless, one of the best, as you will see when you get to know her better."

His changing the conversation from remarking that I was not in love to praising his sister delighted me beyond measure and made me blush, but still, I said nothing to him about her, and we went on talking of other things.

We talked on and on thus until the cocks had crowed a second time. A pale dawn was peeping through the window when Dmitry at last went over to his own bed and blew out the candle.

"Now, let's go to sleep," he said.

"Yes," I replied, "but there is just one more thing."

"Well?"

"Life really is grand, is it not?" I said.

"Life really is grand," he replied, and I imagined, from the sound of his voice, that in spite of the dark I could see his twinkling, gentle eyes and his childlike smile.

Chapter 28

IN THE COUNTRY

The following day Volodya and I set out by post horses for Petrovskoye. On the way, turning over in my mind my various Moscow reminiscences, I thought of Sonichka Valakhina, but this was only in the evening, when we had already covered five stages. "How strange," I thought, "that I am in love and have forgotten all about it; I must think about her." And I began thinking of her, as one thinks when travelling: disconnectedly but vividly, and I thought myself into such a state that for two days after our arrival in Petrovskoye I somehow considered it necessary to appear sad and pensive when with my family, and especially with Katenka, whom I regarded to be a great expert in such matters and to whom I hinted about the state of my heart. Yet, for all my efforts to deceive others and myself, and for all my affectation of the many symptoms I had noticed in others who were in

love, I only succeeded in remembering that I was in love for two days, and that not continuously, but chiefly in the evenings, so that as soon as I settled into the new routine of country life and pursuits, I quite forgot about my love for Sonichka.

We arrived in Petrovskoye at night, and I was sleeping so soundly that I saw neither the house, nor the birch alley; nor were any of the household about, as they had all gone to bed and were fast asleep. Stooped old Foka, barefoot and wearing a quilted jacket of his wife's, came with a candle to unlatch the door. At the sight of us he trembled with joy, kissed each of us on the shoulder, hurriedly put away the piece of felt on which he slept and began to dress. I passed through the entryway and up the stairs, not yet fully awake, but in the hall the lock on the door, the latch, a warped floorboard, the chest, the old candlestick spotted as of old with tallow, the shadows cast by the crooked flame of the freshly-lit candle and the ever-dusty double panes of the window whose winter frame was never removed and beyond which, as I recalled, there grew a rowan tree, were all so familiar, so full of memories, so harmonious, united, as it were, by a common idea, that I suddenly felt that the dear old house was tenderly welcoming me back. I asked myself unwittingly: how was it that we, the house and I, had been able to live so long apart? And I hastened off to see whether the other rooms were all still the same. All was the same, though everything had grown smaller and lower, while I seemed to have grown taller, heavier and coarser, but even as I was, the house received me joyously into its embrace, and every floorboard, every window, each tread of the stairs, and every sound stirred up in me a host of images, feelings and events of the irremeable, happy past. We reached our nursery: all the childish terrors lurked again in the gloom of the corners and the doorways; we passed through the drawing room: the same quiet, tender mother-love hovered over every object in the room; we passed through the salon: noisy, carefree, childish mirth seemed to reside in this room still, waiting only to be revived. In the sitting room, whence Foka took us and where he made up our beds, it seemed that everything:

the looking-glass, the screen, the old wooden icon, every imperfection of the white papered wall, spoke of suffering, of death, and of what would never be again.

We got into bed, and Foka left us after bidding us goodnight.

"Mamma died in this room, didn't she?" said Volodya.

I did not reply, pretending to be asleep. Had I said anything, I should have begun to cry. When I awoke the next morning Papa was sitting on Volodya's bed in his dressing-gown, wearing a pair of bright Morocco boots and smoking a cigar, talking and laughing with him. He jumped up with a cheerful jerk of his shoulder, came across to me, slapped me on the back with his large hand, offered me his cheek and pressed it to my lips.

"That's just fine. Thank you, Diplomat," he said in his peculiar, affectionately bantering manner, fixing his small bright eyes on me. "Volodya tells me you passed your examinations well. Good for you. That's just fine. When you don't act up, you're a fine fellow, too. Thank you, my boy. We shall have a good time here; next winter, perhaps, we may move to St. Petersburg; what a pity that the hunting season is over, else I should have given you a treat. But can you shoot, Woldemar? There's no end of game, so that I may go out with you myself some day. Well, in the winter, God willing, we shall move to St. Petersburg, where you will get to meet people and make useful connections; you are grown boys now and, as I was just saying to Woldemar, you are started on life's road, and my task is completed. You are able to go on by yourselves, but if ever you wish to ask my advice, do so, for I am now no longer your keeper, but your friend – at any rate, I want to be your friend and comrade, and adviser in whatever way I can, and nothing more. How does this fit in with your philosophy, Coco? Is it good or bad? Eh?"

Naturally, I said that it was splendid, and I indeed found it to be so. Papa was particularly attractive, cheerful and happy this day, while his new attitude towards me, as towards an equal, as towards a comrade, caused me to love him more than ever.

"Well, now tell me, have you been to see all our relations? The Ivins? Have you seen the old man? What did

he say to you?" he went on questioning me. "Have you called on Prince Ivan Ivanovich?"

And we talked on for so long before dressing that the sun had already begun to move away from the sitting room windows and Yakov (who seemed just as old, who waggled his fingers behind his back and still said *all the same*) came into the room to tell Papa that the calash was ready.

"Where are you going?" I asked Papa.

"Oh, I almost forgot," said Papa with a jerk of vexation and clearing his throat, "I promised to visit the Epifanovs today. Do you remember Mademoiselle Epifanova, *la belle Flamande*? She used to visit your mamma. They are fine people." And Papa, with a self-conscious shrug of his shoulder, or so it seemed to me, left the room.

While we were talking Lyubochka had come to the door several times and asked: "May I come in?" But each time Papa had shouted to her through the door: "By no means, because we are not dressed."

"What does it matter? Have I not seen you in your dressing-gown?"

"You may not see your brothers when they are not dressed," he called to her, "but each of them will rap on the door to you. Will that do? Rap now, boys. Why, it is not even proper for them to speak to you in such dishabille."

"Oh, you are all insufferable! Well, then, at least hurry down to the drawing room. Mimi is so anxious to see you," Lyubochka shouted through the door.

As soon as Papa had gone, I quickly donned my student's uniform and went down to the drawing room. Volodya, however, was in no hurry and stayed upstairs for quite some time, talking to Yakov, discussing where snipe and double snipe were to be found. Volodya, as I have already intimated, feared nothing so much as evincing sentimentality towards his dear little brother, dearest papa or dear little sister, as he put it, and avoiding every show of tenderness, he went to the opposite extreme, affecting a coldness which often hurt people who did not understand its cause. In the front hall I collided with Papa, who was hurrying with short, rapid steps to-

wards the calash. He was wearing his fashionable new Moscow frock-coat and he smelled of scent. Seeing me, he nodded cheerfully, as much as to say: "See how splendid everything is?" and I was once again struck by the happy expression of his eyes which I had noticed that morning.

The drawing room was still the same bright, high-ceilinged room with an English birchwood grand piano in it and large open windows into which the green trees and the reddish-yellow garden paths looked cheerfully. I had kissed Mimi and Lyubochka and approached Katenka when it suddenly occurred to me that it would no longer be proper for me to kiss her and, blushing, I stopped short in silence. Katenka, not in the least put out, offered me her small white hand and congratulated me upon my matriculation. When Volodya came into the drawing room and saw Katenka he, too, experienced what I had. Indeed, it was difficult to make up one's mind how we, who had grown up together and had seen each other every day, were to behave now in greeting each other after our first separation. Now Katenka blushed more furiously than either of us; Volodya was not at all perturbed. He bowed lightly to her, went over to Lyubochka, with whom he spoke for a short time and not at all seriously, and then went out for a walk by himself.

Chapter 29

OUR RELATIONS WITH THE GIRLS

Volodya had very strange ideas about the girls: he could be concerned about: whether they had eaten well, slept well, were properly dressed and did not make mistakes in French, something which would cause him to feel embarrassed in the presence of strangers, but he never admitted that they were capable of thinking or feeling like human beings and found it even less possible to discuss anything with them. Whenever they approached him with some serious question (which, however, they now avoided doing), if they asked his opinion about a novel or in-

quired about anything concerning his studies at the University, he would pull a face at them and walk away without speaking, or else would reply in broken French, such as: *Comme si tri jauli*[1], and so on; or, putting on a grave, intentionally stupid expression, he would utter words that had no meaning or connection with their question. His eyes would suddenly become vacant and he would intone words like: *bun, off we go, cabbage*, or some such. When I chanced to repeat to him something Lyubochka or Katenka had told me, he would invariably say:

"Hm! Do you mean to say you still discuss things with them? Well, I see you are still in a bad way."

And one had to see and to hear him at that moment to appreciate the profound, immutable contempt which those words expressed. Volodya had now been grown up for two years and was incessantly falling in love with every pretty woman he met, but though he saw Katenka every day and she had been wearing long dresses for the last two years and growing prettier every day, the thought that he might fall in love with her never entered his head. Whether this was the result of prosaic childhood memories: of mealtime, bedtime and caprices, as yet too fresh in his memory, or because of the aversion which a very young man feels for everything connected with his home, or because of the common human failing of passing over the good and the beautiful one encounters at the beginning of life, saying to oneself: "Eh! I shall see a lot more of this in my day", whatever the reason, Volodya still did not regard Katenka as a woman.

All that summer Volodya seemed extremely bored; his boredom derived from his contempt of us which, as I have said, he did not even attempt to conceal. The fixed expression of his face implied: "Ugh! How dull it all is! And there is no one to talk to!" He would either go out alone with his gun in the morning or stay in his room reading and would not dress until dinner. If Papa was not home, he would even come down to dinner with a book and continue to read it, not speaking to any of us, which made us all feel somehow guilty. In the evenings, too, he

[1] Instead of *Comme c'est très joli* (How very pretty that is).

would stretch out on the sofa in the drawing room and doze, resting his head on his arm, or with a most solemn countenance would talk dreadful and sometimes rather improper nonsense, which made Mimi furious and caused red splotches to appear on her face, while we split our sides laughing; but apart from Papa, and very occasionally me, he never deigned to speak seriously to any of the family. I unwittingly copied my brother in his attitude towards the girls, though I did not fear sentimentality as he did, and my contempt for them was far from being as deep and established as his. To relieve my boredom that summer I even made several attempts to draw closer to Lyubochka and Katenka, and to converse with them, but each time I encountered in them such an utter failure to think logically and such ignorance of the most simple, everyday things as, for instance, what *money* was, what subjects were taught in the University, what war was, and so on, and such indifference to my explanations of these things that my efforts only confirmed my unfavorable opinion of them.

One evening, Lyubochka was playing an unbearably tiresome passage on the piano for the hundredth time, while Volodya, who was dozing on the drawing room sofa, occasionally muttered with rather malevolent irony, addressing no one in particular: "See her go at it ... A virtuoso ... *Bithoven*!" (He pronounced the name with particular sarcasm.) "Inconceivable ... Now once again ... That's it!" and so on; Katenka and I were still at the tea table and, I do not recall how, Katenka led the conversation around to her favorite subject: Love. I was in a frame of mind conducive to philosophizing and began condescendingly to describe love as the desire to find in another that which one does not possess himself, and so on. But Katenka retorted that, on the contrary, it was not love when a girl contemplated marrying a rich man, and that in her opinion wealth was of no account, but that only love that could weather separation was true love (I realized that she was alluding to her love for Dubkov). Volodya, who had apparently overheard our conversation, suddenly rose up on his elbow and exclaimed on a note of inquiry:

"*Katenka! The camels?*"

"You always speak nonsense!" said Katenka.

"*Into the pepper pot?*" Volodya went on, stressing each syllable. And I could not help thinking that he was quite right.

Apart from the general faculties of perception, sensibility and artistic feeling, more or less developed according to the individual, there exists a special capacity that is more or less developed in different circles of society, and especially in families, that I would call *understanding*. The essence of this capacity lies in a specific sense of proportion and view of things. Two members of the same set or the same family who share this capacity will always allow an expression of feeling up to a certain point; beyond it they both see an empty phrase; at the same moment they both perceive where commendation ends and irony begins, where enthusiasm ends and pretence begins, all of which may appear quite different to people holding different views. People who share the same understanding are struck in the same way by everything they come across, perceiving it in an identically comical, or beautiful, or disagreeable light. To facilitate this understanding there is established among members of the same set or family a language of their own, with special expressions, and even words, which indicate shades of meaning non-existent for others. In our family this sort of understanding was developed to the highest degree between Papa and us boys. Dubkov had also fitted in with our set quite well and *understood*, but Dmitry, though far more intelligent than he, was obtuse in this respect. Yet, of all the people I knew, I achieved the best understanding with Volodya, having been brought up in similar circumstances. Papa had fallen behind us long before, and much that was as clear as day to us was incomprehensible to him. For instance, there had become established between Volodya and me, heaven knows how, the following words and their corresponding meanings: *apricot* signified an ostentatious desire to show that one had money; *cushion* (at which one had to make an "o" of one's fingers and put special emphasis on the *sh* sound) meant something fresh, sound and comely, but not dandyish; a noun used in the plural

indicated a partiality for the object in question, and so on, and so forth. However, the meaning depended more on the expression of one's face and on the general context of the conversation, so that no matter what new word one of us might invent to express a new shade of meaning, the other would understand him instantly. The girls did not share our understanding, and this was the principal cause of our mental estrangement and of the contempt in which we held them.

Perhaps they had an *understanding* of their own, but it was so dissimilar to ours that where we were ready to descry empty phrases they saw feeling, and what to us was irony was truth to them, and so on. But at the time I did not understand that they were not to blame for this, and that this lack of understanding did not prevent their being pretty and clever girls, and I despised them. Withall, having once embraced the idea of frankness and carried the application of this idea in myself to an extreme, I accused Lyubochka of secretiveness and insincerity because her tranquil, trusting nature saw no need for unearthing and dissecting her every thought and impulse. For instance, the fact that Lyubochka blessed Papa before going to bed every night, that she and Katenka wept in the chapel when we attended a memorial service for our mother and that Katenka sighed and rolled her eyes when she played the piano all seemed to me affectation, and I asked myself: when had they learned to pretend so, like grown-ups, and were they not ashamed of themselves?

Chapter 30

MY OCCUPATIONS

For all that, I became closer friends with the young ladies that summer than ever before because of my sudden passion for music. That spring a young neighbor called on us in the country to introduce himself, and the moment he entered the drawing room he fixed his eyes on the piano and then gradually edged his chair towards it, while talk-

ing to Mimi and Katenka. After speaking of the weather and the pleasures of country life, he adroitly led the conversation around to a certain piano tuner, to music, to the piano and, at last, remarked that he could play, and then played three waltzes, with Lyubochka, Mimi and Katenka grouped around the piano and watching him. The young man never called on us again after that, but I liked his manner of playing very much, his attitude at the keyboard, the way he tossed his hair and especially his way of playing chords with his left hand, quickly extending his pinky and thumb the span of an octave and then slowly bringing them together again, and again quickly extending them. This graceful gesture, his easy posture, the way he tossed his hair and the attention which our ladies accorded his talent inspired me with the idea of learning to play the piano. As a result, persuading myself that I was gifted and had an aptitude for music, I began to study. In this respect I acted quite like millions of music students of the male and, particularly, of the female sex, who study music without a good teacher, without a true vocation, without the slightest understanding of what the art can give them or of how to approach it so that it will yield them something. For me music or, rather, playing the piano, was a means to charm the young ladies through my sensibilities. With Katenka to help me, I learned the notes, and having somewhat broken in my thick fingers, a task which took almost two months of such assiduity that I even excercised my refractory third finger on my knee at dinner and on my pillow in bed, I at once proceeded to play *pièces* and, of course, put my heart into them, playing *avec âme*, as Katenka admitted, but not keeping time at all.

My choice of pieces was the usual one: waltzes, galops and love songs (all of them arrangements), and so forth, all by those charming composers whose works any person with but a modicum of good taste will set aside in a small pile from a large pile of beautiful compositions in a music shop and will say: "These are what one ought not to play, because nothing worse, nothing more lacking in taste or in meaning was ever put down on music paper" and which, no doubt for this very reason, you will find on the

music stand of every Russian young lady. True, we had Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique* and *Sonata in C Sharp Minor*, forever ruined and mangled by the young ladies, which Lyubochka played in memory of Mamma, and some other fine pieces which her Moscow music teacher had assigned to her, but there were likewise compositions by this same teacher, the most absurd marches and galops, which Lyubochka also played. Katenka and I, however, did not like serious music, preferring "Le Fou" and "The Nightingale", which Katenka played so fast that one could not follow her fingers, and which I, too, was beginning to play quite loudly and with facility. I had adopted the young man's gestures and often regretted that there was no one outside the family to see me play. But Liszt and Kalkbrenner soon proved beyond my powers, and I realized I should never catch up with Katenka. Accordingly, imagining classical music to be simpler, and partly for the sake of being original, I suddenly decided that I liked scholarly German music and went into raptures when Lyubochka played the *Sonata Pathétique*, though, to tell the truth, the sonata had long since inspired in me a feeling of extreme boredom, and I began to play Beethoven myself, pronouncing his name *Beeethoven*. As I now see it, there was in all this muddle and pretence, however, something in the nature of talent, for music often touched me to tears, and the pieces I liked I could pick out more or less by ear; so that had anyone at the time taught me to regard music as an end in itself, as a pleasure in its own right, and not as a means of charming young ladies by the facility and emotion of my playing, I might, perhaps, have indeed become a decent musician.

Reading French novels, of which Volodya had brought along a great number, was another of my occupations that summer. At the time, *The Count of Monte Cristo* and various other *Mystères* were only just beginning to appear, and I was fascinated by the novels of Sue, Dumas and Paul de Kock. All the most unbelievable personages and events were as much alive to me as reality, and far from suspecting the author of untruth, I was simply oblivious of the author's existence, while real, live people and

events appeared to me of their own accord from the printed page. Though I had never come across anyone like the personages I read about, I never for a moment doubted that I *should*.

I discovered in myself all the passions described and a likeness to all the characters, both to the heroes and to the villains, of every novel, just as an impressionable person detects in himself the symptoms of every possible disease when reading a medical tract. In these novels I liked the clever thoughts and ardent emotions, the magical events and the wholly complete characters: if a person was good, he was good through and through; if he was bad, he was bad through and through, exactly as I imagined people to be in my early youth. I was very, very pleased, because all this was in French, and because I could commit to memory the noble words spoken by the noble characters, so that I might use them when an opportunity of performing some noble deed presented itself. How many French phrases had I composed with the aid of these novels for Kolpikov, were I ever to encounter him again, and for *her*, should I at last meet her and speak to her of my love! I prepared *such things* to say, that on hearing them they would undoubtedly be smitten. On the basis of these novels I even formed new ideals of moral perfection which I wished to attain. Above all, I wished to be *noble* in all my actions and affairs (I say *noble* and do not use the Russian *blagoródnii*, for the word has a different connotation in French, something the Germans understood when they adopted the word *nobel*, not confusing it with *ehrlich*[1]), then I would be *passionate* and, finally, something to which I was previously also inclined, I would be as *comme il faut* as possible. I even attempted to copy the appearance and habits of the personages who possessed any of these fine traits. I recall that in one of the many novels I read that summer there was an extremely passionate gentleman with bushy eyebrows. I so wished to be like him in appearance (morally I felt myself to be exactly like him) that, on examining my eyebrows in the glass, I took it into my head to trim them

[1] Honorable.

slightly, that they might grow in thicker, but when I began to cut them I happened to cut off too much in one place and so was compelled to trim the rest accordingly. To my horror, I beheld myself in the glass as quite browless in the end and, consequently, most ugly. However, taking comfort in the hope that I would soon have the heavy brows of a passionate man, I was merely concerned with what I would say to the family when they saw me without my eyebrows. I borrowed some of Volodya's gunpowder, rubbed it into my brows and set fire to it. Though the powder did not explode, I looked sufficiently like someone who had been singed. No one saw through my deception and, indeed, when I had quite forgotten about the passionate gentleman, my eyebrows grew back in much thicker.

Chapter 31

COMME IL FAUT

In the course of this narrative I have several times referred to a conception corresponding to the French heading of this chapter, and I now feel it necessary to devote an entire chapter to this conception, which was one of the most pernicious and fallacious conceptions I had held in my life, instilled in me by my upbringing and by my social milieu.

The human race may be divided into many categories: rich and poor, good and bad, military and civilian, clever and foolish, and so on, and so forth, but each person inevitably has a favorite and principal classification of his own which he unconsciously applies to every new person he comes across. At the time of which I am writing, my own favorite and principal division of people was into those who were *comme il faut* and those who were *comme il ne faut pas*.[1] The latter I subdivided into those not *comme il faut*, per se, and the common people. I respected those who were *comme il faut* and considered them

[1] Not of good class.

worthy of consorting with me as my equals; the second category I pretended to scorn, though in reality I detested them, nourishing a feeling of personal injury against them, as it were; the third did not exist for me at all: I despised them utterly. My own *comme il faut* consisted, first and foremost, in being fluent in French, particularly in having an impeccable pronunciation. A person who spoke French with an accent at once inspired in me a feeling of hatred. "Why do you wish to speak as we do when you cannot?" I would mentally inquire of him with biting irony. The second condition of being *comme il faut* was the appearance of one's fingernails: these had to be long, well-kept and clean; the third was to know how to bow, dance and converse properly; the fourth, and a very important one, was indifference to everything and a perpetual air of elegant and supercilious ennui. I also recognized certain general indications by which I determined without speaking to a man to what category he belonged. Chief among these indications, apart from the furnishing of his room, his seal, his handwriting and his carriage, were his legs and feet. The relation of a man's boots to his pantaloons at once decided his social standing in my eyes. Boots without heels and with pointed toes, and pantaloons narrow at the bottom and lacking straps showed him to be *common*; boots with narrow, rounded toes and with heels, and close-fitting pantaloons narrow at the bottom and with straps, or wide, having straps and ballooning above the toe, proved a man to be *mauvais genre*,[1] and so on.

How odd that I, who was positively incapable of being *comme il faut*, should have been so obsessed by this conception. But perhaps it took such strong hold of me for the very reason that it demanded a tremendous effort on my part to acquire this same *comme il faut*. It is dreadful to recall how much priceless time, the best in life, the sixteen-year-old period, was wasted on acquiring this quality. To all those whom I imitated: to Volodya, Dubkov and most of my friends, it seemed to come easily. I regarded them with envy and surreptitiously labored at my French, at the art of bowing without looking at the person to

[1] Bad form.

whom I was bowing, at my conversation, my dancing, at cultivating an attitude of indifference and ennui towards all and everything, at my fingernails, cutting the cuticles with my scissors, yet I still felt that there was much more to be done, were I ever to achieve my goal. As to my room, my writing table and my droshky, for the life of me I could not arrange these in such a way as to give them an air of *comme il faut*, though I did my best to attend to them in spite of my disinclination for practical affairs. Others, however, and seemingly without any effort, made out splendidly, as though it could not have been otherwise. I remember once, after a protracted and useless struggle over my nails, I asked Dubkov, whose nails were exceedingly good, whether they had long been like that and how he had achieved such perfection. Dubkov replied: "For as far back as I can remember, I have never done anything about them, and I cannot understand how a decent man might have any other." This reply disappointed me greatly. I did not yet know that one of the chief conditions of *comme il faut* was the secrecy attached to those efforts by which *comme il faut* was achieved. To be *comme il faut* was, in my estimation, not only a great merit, an admirable quality, a perfection I was anxious to achieve, but an indispensable condition of life, without which there could be no happiness, no glory, nor anything good in the world. I should have had no respect for a famous actor or scholar, or benefactor of the human race, were he not *comme il faut*. A man who was *comme il faut* was above and beyond comparison with them; he left it to them to paint pictures, compose music, write books and do good, and he even commended them for it – and why not commend the good in a person, no matter who he be? – but he could not place himself on a level with them, for he was *comme il faut* and they were not, and there was no more to be said. In fact, I believe that had I had a mother, a father or a brother who was not *comme il faut* I should have said it was a misfortune, but that such being the case, there could be nothing in common at all between them and me. However, neither the loss of the golden hours wasted on constant efforts to observe all the for me so difficult conditions of the *comme il faut*, which

prevented any serious pursuit, nor the hatred and contempt I experienced towards nine-tenths of the human race, nor my disregard of all the beauty that existed outside the *comme il faut* set, none of this was yet the greatest evil inflicted on me by this conception. The greatest evil lay in my conviction that the *comme il faut* was an independent condition in society, that a man need not exert himself to become an official, an officer or a scholar as long as he was *comme il faut*; but that having attained this condition, he was already fulfilling his destiny and was even superior to the greater part of humanity.

At a certain period of his youth, after many blunders and excesses, a man usually recognizes the necessity of taking an active part in social life, chooses some field of activity and devotes himself to it; but this seldom happens to one who is *comme il faut*. I have known and still know very, very many old men who are proud, self-assured and opinionated, who in reply to the question, if such were to be asked of them in the next world: "Who are you? And what have you accomplished down there?" should be unable to reply other than: "*Je fus un homme très comme il faut.*" [1]

Such was the fate that awaited me.

Chapter 32

YOUTH

Notwithstanding the great confusion of ideas in my head that summer, I was young, innocent, free and, therefore, almost happy.

Sometimes, and not infrequently, I would rise early. (I slept in the open air on the veranda, and the bright, slanting rays of the morning sun would waken me.) I would dress quickly, tuck a towel and a French novel under my arm and go down to the river to bathe near a birch copse about half a mile from the house. There I would lie in the shade on the grass and read, occasionally raising my eyes

[1] I was a man of impeccable breeding.

from the book to watch the surface of the river, purple in the shade and beginning to ripple in the morning breeze, the field of yellowing rye on the opposite bank, the shimmering red of the morning sunlight as it tinted, ever lower and lower, the white trunks of the birches which, hiding behind each other, receded into the depth of the bright forest, and I rejoiced in the consciousness of having the same fresh, young vigor of life within me as Nature breathed forth all around. When there were small gray morning clouds in the sky and I felt chilled after bathing, I often set off headlong across fields and through woods, and I felt pleasure in getting my boots wet through and through in the fresh dew. I would be vividly picturing to myself the heroes of the last novel I had read and seeing myself now a general, now a minister, now a man of great strength and now a man of passion, and I constantly and anxiously looked around in the hope of suddenly encountering *her* in a glade or behind a tree. When, in the course of these walks, I came across peasant men and women at work, although the *common people* did not exist for me, I always experienced an involuntary feeling of acute embarrassment and tried to avoid being noticed. When it grew hot and the ladies had not yet come down to morning tea, I often went into the garden or the orchard to eat whatever vegetables or fruit were ripe, and this occupation afforded me one of my greatest pleasures.

I go into the apple orchard or into the very midst of a tall raspberry thicket. Overhead is the bright, hot sky, while all around me the pale-green, prickly foliage of the raspberry canes is intermingled with the weeds. Dark-green nettles with slender, flowering tops stretch gracefully upwards; broad-leaved burdocks with unnaturally purple, prickly flowers grow rankly above the raspberry canes and higher than my head, and here and there, together with the nettles, reach up as far as the pale-green, spreading branches of the old apple trees on which, high up, pushing against the hot sun, shiny green apples as round as polished stones are ripening. Below, a bent and almost dry young raspberry cane, bereft of leaves, reaches up to the sun; the spiky green grass and dew-drenched young burdock leaves coming up through last year's leaves grow

a lush green in the perpetual shade, as though unaware of the sun that is playing brightly on the leaves of the apple tree.

It is always damp in this thicket redolent of confined and perpetual shade, of cobwebs, of fallen apples that are turning black where they lie on the rotting leaf-mold, of raspberries and sometimes of a shield bug which you swallow unwittingly with a berry and then hastily pop another berry into your mouth to take away the taste. Advancing farther, you startle the sparrows that live in this covert, you hear their anxious twittering and their rapid little wings beating in the branches; in one spot you catch the buzzing of a large bee, and somewhere on the path you hear the step of the gardener, the half-wit Akim, and his incessant humming to himself. Then you say to yourself: "No! Neither he nor anyone else in the world will find me here..." And with both hands, to right and left, you pluck the juicy berries from their little white cones and cram them into your mouth delightedly. Your legs are wet through, even above your knees, and your head is full of terrible nonsense (you repeat to yourself a thousand times: a-a-a-nd by twe-en-ties, a-a-nd by sevens), your arms and your legs through your damp pantaloons sting from the nettles, the vertical rays of the sun piercing the thicket begin to scorch your head, you have long since grown sated, yet, still you crouch there, looking about, listening, pondering and unthinkingly plucking and swallowing the most luscious berries.

I generally entered the drawing room after ten, when breakfast was over and the ladies had settled at their various occupations. Beside the nearest window with its lowered unbleached linen curtain through whose cracks the bright sun cast such blinding, fiery spots on everything in its path that it made your eyes ache to look at them, stood an embroidery frame, and flies were slowly crawling across its white square of linen. Mimi sat at the frame, tossing her head incessantly and irritably and moving her chair to escape the sun which would suddenly break through somewhere, laying now here, now there a blazing strip across her face or arm. Through the other three win-

lows luminous rectangles complete with the shadows of their cross-pieces were formed; upon one of these, on the unstained drawing room floor, Milka lay, as of old, and, pricking up her ears, watched the flies crawling about the bright rectangle. Katenka, seated on the sofa, knitted or read, brushing the flies away impatiently with her pale hand which seemed transparent in the bright light or, frowning, shook her head to drive away a buzzing fly entangled in her thick golden hair. Lyubochka either paced up and down the room with her hands behind her back, waiting until they should go into the garden, or played some piece of which I had long known every note. I would find a seat somewhere and listen to the music or the reading until such time as I might take possession of the piano myself. After dinner I would occasionally deign to go riding with the girls (I considered it unsuitable to my years and position in society to go walking). And these outings, during which I would take them to unaccustomed places and over ravines, were often very pleasant. We would sometimes meet with an adventure in which I would show myself to be a dashing fellow, and the ladies would praise my riding and courage, and consider me their protector. In the evening, if there were no visitors, after tea which we took on the shady veranda and after a stroll with Papa around the estate, I would lie back in my old place, the wing chair, and read as I listened to Katenka or Lyubochka at the piano and, at the same time, daydream as of old. Sometimes, left alone in the drawing room, with Lyubochka playing some old air, I would unconsciously put down my book and, gazing through the open veranda door at the drooping, leafy tendrils of the tall birches over which the evening shadows were creeping, and at the clear sky on which, if you looked at it intently, there suddenly seemed to appear a misty yellowish spot which would then disappear again, and listening to the sounds of the music issuing from the salon, to the creaking of the gate, to the voices of the peasant women and to the herd returning to the village, I would suddenly and vividly recall Natalia Savishna, Mamma and Karl Ivanych, and for a moment feel sad, but my heart at that time was so full of life and hope that

these memories would merely brush me with their wings and fly away.

After supper, followed sometimes by a late stroll with someone in the garden, as I was afraid to go walking down the dark paths alone, I would retire to a bed made up for me on the veranda floor; this, in spite of the swarms of mosquitoes which devoured me, gave me great pleasure. When the moon was full I often spent whole nights sitting up on my mattress, peering into the light and shadows, listening to the stillness and the sounds, dreaming about various things, but more particularly about poetic, sensual bliss, which then seemed to me the greatest happiness in life, and grieving because so far it had only been granted to me to imagine it. Sometimes, as soon as everyone had retired and the lights had gone from the drawing room to the upstairs rooms, whence came the sound of women's voices and of windows being opened or shut, I would go out to the veranda and walk up and down there, listening eagerly to all the sounds of a house drifting off to sleep. As long as there was a faint, unfounded hope of even the slightest bliss such as I longed for, I could not calmly give myself up to dreams of imaginary bliss.

At every sound of a bare footstep, at every cough, sigh, squeak of a window or rustle of a dress I would jump up from my bed, listen as stealthily as a thief, peer intently and grow excited without any apparent reason. Now the lights would disappear in the upstairs windows, the sounds of footsteps and conversation would give way to snores, the watchman would begin to strike his slate, and the garden would become both gloomier and brighter the moment the streaks of red light falling from the windows had vanished. The last candle would move from the pantry to the front hall, laying a strip of light across the dewy garden, and through the window I could see the stooped figure of Foka, clad in a woman's jacket and carrying the candle, going to his bed. I often found great and exciting pleasure in stealing across the wet grass in the black shadow of the house to approach the front hall window and listen with bated breath to the snores of the servant boy and the groans of Foka, who imagined no one

could hear him, and to the sound of his old voice as for a long, long while he prayed. At last his, the one remaining candle, would be extinguished, the window would slam shut, and I would be left quite alone. Glancing about with a faint heart to see if there might be a woman in white lurking anywhere among the flower beds or standing beside my own bed, I would race back to the veranda. Then, getting into my bed with my face towards the garden and covering myself up as best I could to protect myself from the mosquitoes and bats, I would gaze into the garden, listen to the voices of the night and dream of love and happiness.

Then everything acquired a new meaning for me: the sight of the old birches with their leafy branches gleaming in the moonlight on one side and, on the other, darkly covering the bushes and the drive with their black shadows, and the tranquil, luxurious glitter of the pond swelling steadily like a sound, and the moonlit brilliance of dewdrops on the flowers in front of the veranda which also threw their graceful shadows across the gray flower beds, and the call of a quail beyond the pond, and the voice of a man on the high road, and the gentle, scarcely audible scraping of two old birch trees against one another, and the drone of a mosquito at my ear under the blanket, and an apple catching on a branch as it fell onto the dry leaves, and the plops of frogs that sometimes came jumping as far as the veranda steps, their greenish backs gleaming mysteriously in the moonlight, all this took on a strange significance for me, the significance of beauty too great and of happiness somehow incomplete. And then *she* would appear with her long black braid and her full bosom, ever sad and lovely, with bare arms and voluptuous embraces. She loved me, and for one moment of her love I would sacrifice my entire life. But the moon rose higher and higher, growing brighter and brighter in the sky, the luxurious glitter of the pond, swelling steadily like a sound, grew clearer and clearer, the shadows grew darker and darker, the light more and more limpid, and gazing and listening intently, I heard a voice telling me that even *she*, with her bare arms and passionate embraces, was still very, very far from being all the happi-

ness there was in the world, and that my love for her was very, very far from being all the bliss there was; and the longer I gazed at the high, full moon, the loftier and loftier, the purer and purer, the nearer and nearer to Him, the source of all beauty and bliss, did true beauty and bliss seem to me, and tears of unfulfilled but tremulous joy welled up in my eyes.

And still I was alone, and still it seemed to me that Nature, in her mysterious grandeur, drawing one to the bright circle of the moon that had for some reason halted at some high, uncertain spot in the pale-blue sky and yet was present everywhere, and seemed to fill all of infinity, and myself, an insignificant worm already defiled by all the mean, paltry human passions, though endowed also with an immeasurable, mighty power of imagination and love, it seemed to me at such moments that Nature, the Moon and I were one.

Chapter 33

THE NEIGHBORS

I was astounded the day after our arrival to hear Papa speak of our neighbors, the Epifanovs, as splendid people, and was even more astounded when I learned that he visited them. The Epifanovs and our family had long been engaged in litigation over some piece of land. As a child, I had often heard Papa grow angry over this litigation, storm at the Epifanovs and appeal to various people in order, as I understood it at the time, to protect himself from them. I had heard Yakov call them our enemies and *black people*,[1] and I recall Mamma saying that she would appreciate it if those people were never mentioned in her house and in her presence.

From these facts I had constructed for myself in childhood so definite and clear a notion that the Epifanovs were our *enemies*, prepared to stab or strangle not only Papa, but his son as well if they were ever to lay their

[1] "Black people" denoted the common people.–*Tr.*

hands on him, and that they were indeed *black* people, that when, in the year of my mother's death, I beheld Avdotia Vasilyevna Epifanova, *la belle Flamande*, attending to her, I could scarcely believe that she came from the family of black people and retained a very low opinion of them all the same. Though we often saw them that summer, I remained strangely prejudiced against the entire family. In point of fact, the Epifanov family consisted of: Anna Dmitryevna, the mother, a fifty-year-old widow, a still fresh and lively woman, Avdotia Vasilyevna, her beautiful daughter, and Pyotr Vasilyevich, her stammering bachelor son, a retired lieutenant and a man of grave disposition.

Anna Dmitryevna Epifanova had lived apart from her husband for some twenty years before his death, residing occasionally in St. Petersburg, where she had relations, but mostly on her country estate, Mytishchi, a mile or so from ours. Such frightful stories were circulated in the district of her goings on as made Messalina seem an innocent babe by comparison. That was why my mother had requested that Madame Epifanova's name never be mentioned in our house; speaking seriously, however, one could not believe one-tenth of that most vicious of all gossip, the gossip of country neighbors. At the time I first met Anna Dmitryevna, though, she had in her house a serf, a clerk named Mityusha, who, dressed in a Circassian coat, curled and pomaded, always stood behind her chair at dinner, and though in his presence, and speaking in French, she frequently invited her guests to admire his handsome eyes and lips, there was nothing even faintly resembling what rumor persisted in reporting. Indeed, it appeared that ten years previously, when Anna Dmitryevna had appealed to her dutiful son Pyotr to leave the army and come home, she had quite changed her ways. Her estate was not large, having, in all, only a hundred-odd serfs, and since the expenses had been considerable during the frivolous period of her life, and the payments on her mortgaged and remortgaged estate were then, ten years previously, naturally overdue, it appeared that it would have to be put up for auction. In this extremity, supposing that the trusteeship, the inventory taken of the

estate, the arrival of the magistrate and other similar unpleasantnesses arose not so much in consequence of her failure to pay the interest due, as from the fact that she was a woman, Anna Dmitryevna wrote to her son, then serving with his regiment, beseeching him to come home and save his mother. Though Pyotr Vasilyevich's career was progressing so well that he soon hoped to have a decent income of his own, he gave up everything, resigned and, being a devoted son who considered it his prime duty to comfort his mother in her old age (as he quite sincerely wrote to her in his letters), returned to Mytishchi.

Pyotr Vasilyevich, notwithstanding his plain face, awkwardness and his stammer, was a man of extremely high principles and possessed an unusually astute mind. With the aid of small loans, various expedients, petitions and promises, he somehow managed to preserve the estate. On becoming a landowner, Pyotr Vasilyevich took to wearing his father's coat, which had been packed away in the storeroom, dispensed with the horses and carriages, put a stop to the constant train of visitors, sank wells, increased his arable land, decreased the peasants' allotments, had his serfs cut down his grove, sold the timber at a good price and brought his affairs into order. Pyotr Vasilyevich vowed to himself that until all the debts were paid off he would wear no other coat than his father's or a canvas coat he had had made for himself and would ride only in a cart drawn by peasant horses, and he kept his word. He tried to introduce this stoic way of life to the rest of the family, insofar as his obsequious devotion to his mother, which he regarded as his duty, allowed him. In the drawing room he fawned upon her, fulfilled her every wish and berated the servants if they did not do as she told them, while in his study and in the office he called everyone strictly to account if a duck were served at dinner without his orders or if, at Anna Dmitryevna's bidding, a man had been sent to inquire about a neighbor's health, or if the serf girls had been sent to the woods to pick wild raspberries instead of having them weed the vegetable garden.

Within four years or so the debts were paid off, and

Pyotr Vasilyevich journeyed to Moscow, returning in a new trap and wearing a new coat. But in spite of the flourishing state of his affairs, he still retained his stoical inclinations, in which he seemed to take a gloomy pride before the household and strangers, and often said with a stammer that "anyone who truly wishes to see me will be pleased to see me even in a sheepskin and will partake of my cabbage soup and buckwheat porridge. After all, I eat them myself," he would add. His every word and gesture expressed pride founded upon a consciousness of having sacrificed his career for his mother, of having redeemed the estate and upon scorn for those who had done nothing of the kind.

The mother and daughter were of quite a different cast, though in many respects they differed from one another. The mother was one of the most agreeable women in society, always sweet-tempered and cheerful. Everything that was charming and cheerful delighted her, and she even possessed, and this in the highest degree, a trait met with only in the kindest of elderly persons: she liked to see young people enjoying themselves. Her daughter, Avdotia Vasilyevna, was, on the contrary, of a grave disposition or, rather, of that vaguely indifferent and uncalled for haughty bearing which unmarried beauties usually possess. When, however, she wished to be merry, her mirth seemed odd: it was as though she were laughing at herself, or at the person with whom she was speaking, or at the world in general, something she assuredly did not mean to do. I often wondered and asked myself what she could have meant when she uttered such phrases as: *yes, I am ravishingly beautiful; indeed, everyone is in love with me*, and so on. Anna Dmitryevna was forever bustling about; she had a passion for arranging her house and garden, for flowers, canaries and pretty trifles. Her small rooms and small garden were very modest, but all was so neat, so clean and all was so suggestive of the carefree gaiety of a pretty waltz or a polka that the word *darling*, often used by her guests in their commendation, suited Anna Dmitryevna's little garden and small rooms extremely well. And Anna Dmitryevna herself was darling: she was petite, had a fine complexion, pretty little

hands, was always merry and always becomingly dressed. Only the rather too-prominent dark-purple veins that stood out on her hands detracted from this general impression. Avdotia Vasilyevna, on the contrary, scarcely ever did anything, cared nothing for dainty trifles and flowers and even neglected her own appearance, so that she invariably had to hurry away to dress when visitors called. However, having changed and returned to the room, she would look very lovely, except for the cold, unvarying expression of her eyes and her smile, common to all very beautiful faces. The classical features of her lovely face and her graceful figure seemed always to be saying to you: "Very well, you may look at me."

But notwithstanding the mother's vivaciousness and the daughter's indifferent and absent-minded manner, something told you that the former had never, either now or in the past, loved anything except what was pretty and gay, and that Avdotia Vasilyevna was one of those people who, if they were once to fall in love, would sacrifice their whole life for their loved one.

Chapter 34

PAPA'S MARRIAGE

My father was forty-eight when he married his second wife, Avdotia Vasilyevna Epifanova.

In the spring, having come to Petrovskoye with the girls, Papa was, I suspect, in that peculiar excited and sociable state of mind that is common to gamblers who call a halt after a winning streak. He felt that he still had a great store of unexpended luck which, if he no longer chose to expend it on card-playing, might help him to succeed in other things in life. Moreover, it was spring, he had suddenly come into possession of a large sum of money, he was quite alone, and bored. Talking over the estate affairs with Yakov and recalling the interminable litigation with the Epifanovs, and also the beautiful Avdotia Vasilyevna, whom he had not seen for a long time,

I can imagine him saying to Yakov: "Do you know, Yakov, instead of bothering about that lawsuit, I believe we should simply let them have the damned plot, eh? What do you say?" I imagine Yakov's fingers beginning to waggle negatively at such a suggestion and can hear him arguing: "All the same, sir, we're in the right, Pyotr Alexandrovich."

But Papa ordered the calash to be readied, put on his fashionable olive-green coat, brushed what hair he had left, scented his handkerchief and in very high spirits, occasioned by the conviction that he was acting in a lordly manner and, above all, by the hope of seeing an attractive woman, he drove off to call on the neighbors.

I only know that on that first visit Papa did not find Pyotr Vasilyevich at home, as he was out in the fields, and so spent an hour or two alone with the ladies. I imagine how he showered compliments on them, how he charmed them, tapping the floor with his soft boot, speaking in intimate tones and looking at them coyly. I imagine, too, how enraptured the merry little widow was and how her cold beauty of a daughter brightened.

When a serving girl ran up breathlessly to inform Pyotr Vasilyevich that the elder Irteniev himself had come calling, I can imagine him replying crossly: "So what if he has?" and, consequently, returning home as slowly as possible, and perhaps also, on reaching his study, intentionally putting on his dirtiest coat and sending a servant to tell the cook that on no account, not even if the mistress ordered it, was anything to be added to their dinner.

I often saw Papa and Epifanov together afterwards, and so I am able to vividly picture to myself their first meeting. I imagine that though Papa offered to settle the dispute amicably, Pyotr Vasilyevich remained sullen, because he had sacrificed his career for his mother's sake, while Papa had done nothing of the kind, something he did not find at all surprising. Papa, as though unaware of his sullenness, was sprightly and debonair, treating him as an amazingly whimsical fellow, which Pyotr Vasilyevich sometimes resented and, occasionally, and against his will, succumbed to. Papa, with his inclination to make light of everything, for some reason or other addressed Pyotr

Vasilyevich as "Colonel", though Epifanov once remarked in my presence, stammering worse than ever and turning red from vexation, that he was not a c-c-colonel, but a lieu-te-te-tenant; yet, five minutes later Papa again addressed him as "Colonel".

Lyubochka told me that before our arrival in Petrovskoye they saw the Epifanovs every day and had had an extremely amusing time. Papa, who had a talent for arranging everything with a touch of originality and wit, and yet simply and with good taste, had got up a hunt, some fishing and a display of fireworks of sorts, at which the Epifanovs had been present. "And it would have been even jollier if not for that insufferable Pyotr Vasilyevich sulking, stammering and spoiling everything," said Lyubochka.

Following our arrival, the Epifanovs only visited us twice, and once we all went to call on them. After St. Peter's day, Papa's name-day, to which they and a crowd of other guests were invited, our relations with the Epifanovs ceased entirely for some reason, and Papa alone continued to visit them. In the short time that I saw Papa together with Dunichka, as her mother called Avdotia Vasilyevna, I noticed the following. Papa was continually in that boyant frame of mind that had struck me on the day of our arrival. He was so cheerful, so young, so full of life and happy that his happiness radiated to include all those around him and involuntarily communicated itself to us. He kept close to Avdotia Vasilyevna's side when she was in the room, incessantly paid her such sickly-sweet compliments that I felt ashamed for him, or else sat gazing silently at her, jerking his shoulder in a passionate, complacent sort of way, clearing his throat and sometimes with a smile even whispering in her ear; but he did it all with the same expression of *just simply jesting* which was characteristic of him even in the gravest matters.

Avdotia Vasilyevna, it seemed, had acquired Papa's happy expression which, at the time, shone almost continually in her large blue eyes, except when she was suddenly seized with such shyness that I, who knew the feeling, felt pained at the sight of her. At such moments she seemed to dread every glance and movement, imagining

that everyone was looking at her, thinking only of her and finding everything about her to be improper. She would look around at everyone in alarm as the color rose to her cheeks and then drained from them, and she would begin to speak loudly and defiantly, uttering nonsense for the most part; she felt this and felt that everyone, including Papa, had heard her, and she blushed even more furiously. However, on such occasions Papa never noticed the nonsense she uttered, but, clearing his throat, went on gazing at her just as rapturously. I noticed that though these fits of shyness came over Avdotia Vasilyevna without any apparent reason, they sometimes immediately followed on someone having mentioned a young and pretty woman in Papa's hearing. Her frequent transitions from pensiveness to that odd, awkward gaiety to which I have already alluded, her use of Papa's pet words and phrases, her way of continuing with others a conversation begun with Papa, all this, had the main character not been my own father and had I been a little older, would have opened my eyes to the relations that existed between Papa and Avdotia Vasilyevna, but at the time I suspected nothing, not even when Papa, on receiving in my presence a letter from Pyotr Vasilyevich, grew quite upset and ceased his visits to the Epifanovs until the end of August.

In the end of August Papa again began to visit our neighbors, and the day before we (Volodya and I) departed for Moscow he informed us that he intended to marry Avdotia Vasilyevna Epifanova.

Chapter 35

HOW WE TOOK THE NEWS

The day before this formal announcement was made everyone in the house already knew of and was variously discussing the matter. Mimi remained in her room all day and wept. Katenka stayed with her and only came down to dinner with a rather injured expression on her face that had clearly been borrowed from her mother; Lyubochka,

on the other hand, was very cheerful and remarked at dinner that she had a marvellous secret which, however, she would not tell a soul.

"There is nothing marvellous about your secret," said Volodya, who did not share in her excitement. "If you were capable of thinking seriously about anything you would understand that, on the contrary, it is most unfortunate."

Lyubochka stared at him in astonishment and said no more.

After dinner Volodya was on the point of taking my arm, but apparently fearing that this might look sentimental, merely touched my elbow and nodded towards the salon.

"Do you know what secret Lyubochka was speaking about?" he said to me when he was certain that we were alone.

Volodya and I seldom spoke to one another privately or of serious matters, so that when we did we experienced a kind of mutual awkwardness and, as Volodya put it, "boys began to dance in our eyes"; but that day, in response to my look of confusion, he continued to gaze gravely and intently into my eyes with an expression that seemed to say: "There is no need to feel embarrassed. After all, we are brothers and must discuss an important family matter together." I understood him and he continued:

"Papa is going to marry Mademoiselle Epifanova. Did you know?"

I nodded, because I had already heard about it.

"It is really unfortunate," Volodya went on.

"Why so?"

"Why?" he replied irritably. "Indeed, it should be delightful to have a stammerer of an uncle like that colonel and all those relations. Besides, though she now seems kind enough and nice, who knows how it will all turn out? Granted, it will not matter to us, but Lyubochka will be coming out soon. With a *belle-mère*[1] like that it won't be very pleasant, for she cannot even speak

[1] Stepmother.

French properly, and she has no manners to teach Lyubochka. She's a *poissarde*,[1] that's what she is; kind, perhaps, but a *poissarde* all the same," Volodya concluded, evidently much pleased with this designation.

Although it was strange for me to hear Volodya discussing Papa's choice so coolly, it seemed to me that he was right.

"Then why is Papa marrying her?" I asked.

"It is a mysterious affair, heaven only knows; all I can say is that Pyotr Vasilyevich entreated and even demanded that he marry her, that Papa did not wish to, and then it took his fancy; it is some notion of chivalry, a mysterious affair altogether. I am only now beginning to understand Father," Volodya went on (that he had called him "father" and not "papa" smote me painfully). "He is a fine man, kind and clever, but so flighty and irresponsible ... it's amazing! He cannot look at a woman without losing his head. Why, you know very well that he falls in love with every woman he meets. Why, even Mimi."

"What?"

"Just what I said; I recently learned that he was in love with Mimi when she was young and wrote poems for her, and there was something between them. Mimi is still heartbroken." And Volodya laughed.

"Impossible!" I exclaimed.

"But above all," Volodya went on gravely again and suddenly began to speak in French, "think of how stunned all our relations will be by such a mésalliance! And she might even have children."

I was so struck by Volodya's common sense and foresight that I did not know what to say. At that point Lyubochka came in.

"Then you know?" she asked with a happy look.

"Yes," said Volodya, "but I am surprised, Lyubochka: after all, you are not a child. How can you be so pleased about Papa marrying some trash?"

Lyubochka suddenly looked grave and grew thoughtful.

"Volodya! Why trash? How dare you speak so of

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[1] Fishwife.

Avdotia Vasilyevna? If Papa intends to marry her, it means she is not trash."

"Well, not trash, I simply put it that way, but all the same..."

"There is no 'all the same' about it," Lyubochka retorted heatedly. "I have never said that the young lady you are in love with is trash; how then can you speak like that about Papa and a splendid woman? Even though you are my eldest brother, never say such things to me. You must not say them!"

"But why should we not discuss things..."

"One must not discuss," Lyubochka retorted again, "one must never discuss a father like ours. Mimi may discuss him, but not you, our elder brother."

"No, you still do not understand a thing," Volodya said scornfully. "Try to understand. Will it be nice for you to have some silly *Dunichka* Epifanova take mamma's place?"

Lyubochka was silent for a moment. Tears suddenly welled up in her eyes.

"I knew you were conceited, but I did not think you were so cruel," she said and left us.

"*Into the pie*," replied Volodya, putting on a rueful face and assuming a vacant stare. "See what comes of discussing things with them?" he continued, evidently reproaching himself for having so far forgotten himself as to stoop to conversing with Lyubochka.

The next day the weather was bad, and neither Papa nor the ladies had come down to morning tea when I entered the drawing room. At night there had been a cold autumnal rain; the remnants of the cloud that had emptied itself during the night were fleeing across the sky, and the sun that was now quite high shone dimly through them as a pale disk. It was windy, damp and cold. The door was open into the garden, and puddles left by the night's rain were drying on the dark, wet floor of the veranda. The open door, fastened back by an iron hook, rattled in the wind, the garden paths were damp and muddy; the old birches with their bare white branches, the bushes and the grass, the nettles, the currants, the elderberry with the pale undersides of its leaves turned outward all strug-

gled where they stood and seemed trying to pull free of their roots; down the linden alley, swirling and chasing one another, round yellow leaves came flying and, growing wet, settled on the wet road and on the wet, dark-green aftermath of the meadow. My thoughts were occupied with my father's impending marriage, examining it from the same point of view as Volodya had. My sister's future, our own and our father's did not seem to hold much promise. I was filled with indignation at the thought that an outsider, a stranger and, above all, a *young* woman, having no right to do so, would suddenly usurp the place in many respects of—whom? An ordinary *young lady* would take the place of my dead mother! I felt depressed, and my father seemed to me more and more in the wrong. At that moment I heard his and Volodya's voices coming from the butler's room. I did not wish to see my father at that moment and moved away from the door, but Lyubochka came for me and said that Papa wished to see me.

He stood in the drawing room, resting one hand on the piano and looking impatiently and at the same time portentiously in my direction. His face no longer held that expression of youth and happiness which I had observed on it all summer. He seemed sad. Volodya, pipe in hand, was pacing the room. I went up to my father and greeted him.

"Well, my dears," he said resolutely, raising his head and speaking in that peculiarly brisk tone of voice people adopt when announcing something obviously unpleasant which, however, it is too late to reconsider. "I believe you are aware that I intend to marry Avdotia Vasilyevna." He paused. "I never meant to marry again after your mamma, but..." he hesitated for a moment, "but ... but it must be Fate. Dunichka is a sweet, kind-hearted girl, and not so very young; I hope you will learn to love her, children, and she already loves you with all her heart. She is good. Now it is time for you," he said, addressing both Volodya and myself and seeming in a hurry to speak, lest we interrupt him, "it is time for you to leave, but I shall stay on until the New Year and will then follow you to Moscow," again he seemed embarrassed, "with my wife

and Lyubochka." It pained me to see my father apparently feeling diffident and guilty towards us, and I drew closer to him, but Volodya continued to smoke with a lowered head and continued to pace up and down.

"So, my dears, this is what your old father has taken it into his head to do," Papa concluded, coloring, clearing his throat and holding out his hands to Volodya and me. Tears stood in his eyes as he said this, and I noticed that the hand he held out to Volodya, who was at that moment at the opposite end of the room, trembled slightly. The sight of that trembling hand struck me painfully as a strange thought occurred to me and moved me even more: it occurred to me that Papa had served in the campaign of 1812 and was known to have been a brave officer. I retained his large veined hand in my own and kissed it. He pressed mine firmly and suddenly, with a sob, took Lyubochka's dark head between his hands and began kissing her on the eyes. Volodya pretended to drop his pipe, bent down, furtively wiped his eyes with his fist and, trying to go unnoticed, left the room.

Chapter 36

THE UNIVERSITY

The wedding was to take place in two weeks, but as our lectures at the University were about to commence, Volodya and I left for Moscow in the first week of September. The Nekhlyudovs had also returned from the country. Dmitry (with whom, on parting, I had exchanged promises to write, though, naturally, neither had written a single letter) came to see me at once, and we decided that the following day he should escort me to the University for my first lecture.

It was a bright, sunny day.

As soon as I entered the auditorium I felt myself dissolving in this throng of happy young men who surged noisily through all the doors and corridors in the bright sunshine streaming in through the large windows. The

consciousness of being a member of this vast company was very pleasant. But of all these persons not many were known to me and my acquaintance with those that were went no farther than a nod and the words: "How do you do, Irteniev!" All around me, though, there was handshaking and jostling, and friendly words, smiles, expressions of goodwill and badinage. Everywhere I was aware of the bond that united all this youthful company and was most disappointed, because this bond had somehow bypassed me. Still, it was but a momentary impression. As a consequence of this and of the vexation born of it, I soon decided that it was even desirous not to belong to this numerous company and that I ought to have my own circle of decent friends, and so took a seat on the third bench beside Count B., Baron Z., Prince R., Ivin and some other gentlemen of that same class, of whom I knew Ivin and Count B. But the glances of these gentlemen, too, made me feel that I did not quite belong to their set, either. I began observing all that went on around me. Semyonov with his tousled gray hair, white teeth and unbuttoned frock-coat sat nearby, leaning on his elbow and gnawing on a quill. The high school pupil who had come out first at the examinations sat in the front row, his cheek still tied up in a black cravat, and was toying with a little silver watch key strung across his satin waistcoat. Ikonin, who had managed to matriculate after all, sat in the last row, wearing piped pale-blue pantaloons that fell over his boots. He was laughing and shouting that he was on Parnassus. Ilenka, who, to my amazement, bowed to me not only coldly, but disdainfully, as though wishing to remind me that here we were all equals, sat in front of me and, having placed his thin legs on the bench with great show (for my benefit, it seemed), was talking to another student and occasionally glancing at me. Beside me, Ivin's set were speaking French. I found these gentlemen to be dreadfully stupid. Every word of their conversation that I overheard seemed to me not merely foolish, but actually not French at all (*ce n'est pas français*, I said to myself), while I found the attitudes, words and manners of Semyonov, Ilenka and the rest vulgar, common and not *comme il faut*.

I did not belong to any set and grew resentful, feeling isolated and incapable of making friends. A student on the bench in front of me was biting his nails, and his fingers with their red hangnails were so disgusting to me that I moved to a seat farther away. I remember that on that first day I was very sad at heart.

When the professor entered there was a general stirring, and then all was silence. I recall I included the professor, too, in my ironic glance and was amazed that he should begin his lecture with an introductory sentence which, in my opinion, did not make sense. I wanted the lecture to be so clever from beginning to end as to make it impossible to add or delete a single word from it. Disappointed in this, under the heading "First Lecture", inscribed in the handsomely-bound notebook I had brought along with me, I immediately proceeded to sketch eighteen profiles joined together in a circle like a wreath and only occasionally moved my hand across the page, so that the professor (who, I felt convinced, was much interested in me) might believe I was taking notes. Having decided at this lecture that it would be unnecessary and even foolish to take down everything each of the professors might say, I kept to this rule to the end of the course.

At the subsequent lectures I did not feel my loneliness as keenly; I became acquainted with many, shook hands and chatted, yet, for some reason, there was still no real intimacy between my fellow students and myself, so that I often found myself depressed and having to put up a pretense. I could not even join Ivin's set of aristocrats, as they were called, because, as I now remember, I shied away and was rude to them, bowing only when they had first bowed to me, and they seemed to have very little need of my company. For quite another reason this same situation was repeated in regard to most of the others. The moment I discerned that a fellow-student was growing friendly towards me, I at once gave him to understand that I dined with Prince Ivan Ivanovich and had my own droshky. I said all this merely to show myself off to better advantage and so that my fellow-student should like me the more for it; yet, on the contrary and to my amazement, in almost every instance, in consequence of the im-

parted news of my kinship with Prince Ivan Ivanovich and my droshky, the other student would suddenly grow cold and distant towards me.

We had among us a bursar student named Operov, an unassuming, very capable and industrious young man who always shook hands with his fingers rigid and straight and his hand as stiff as a board, so that in jest his friends often did the same to him. I almost always took a seat beside him and often talked to him. I was particularly drawn to Operov because of the independent opinions he held concerning the professors. He pointed out the merits and shortcomings of each professor's lecture very clearly and tossed an occasional barb, which struck me as peculiar and startling when uttered in his quiet voice and coming from his tiny little mouth. Nevertheless, he carefully took down every lecture without exception in his small script. Our friendship was beginning to take root. We had decided to study for the examinations together, and his small, gray, nearsighted eyes were already beginning to turn towards me with pleasure when I entered and took my seat beside him, until I found it necessary once in the course of conversation to remark that my mother on her deathbed had begged my father not to send us to school, and that I was beginning to be convinced that all high school graduates, though they might perhaps be very erudite, were to me ... not quite up to the mark: "*Ce ne sont pas des gens comme il faut*," said I, faltering and conscious that I was for some reason growing red. Operov said nothing to me, but from then on he never greeted me first, never offered his hand in a board-like manner, never spoke to me, and when I took my seat, bent his head to one side over his notes, as though he were intent upon them. I was surprised by Operov's unexplainable coolness. However, I considered it beneath the dignity of *un jeune homme de bonne maison*[1] to curry favor with a bursar student named *Operov* and so left him alone, though I confess his aloofness grieved me. Once I arrived before he did at a lecture that was to be delivered by one of the most popular professors, whom

[1] A young man of good family.

even students who were not in the habit of attending lectures regularly came to hear, and since all the seats were occupied, I took Operov's seat, laid my notebooks on the desk and went out. On returning to the auditorium, I saw that my notebooks had been moved to a place in the last row, while Operov was sitting in his usual seat. I remarked to him that I had left my notebooks there.

"I know nothing about that," he replied, flushing suddenly and not looking at me.

"I tell you, I put my notebooks here," said I, intentionally working myself up and hoping to intimidate him by my audacity. "Everyone knows that," I added, glancing around at the other students, but though many looked at me with curiosity, no one responded.

"No one buys their place here: whoever comes first takes the seat," said Operov, shifting angrily in his seat and casting an indignant glance at me.

"That shows you are a boor," said I.

I believe Operov muttered something. I believe he even muttered: "And you're a stupid brat", but I decidedly did not hear it. And, besides, what would have been the use of it, had I heard? Were we to brawl like some *manants*?[1] (I particularly liked the word *manant*, and it served me as an answer and a solution in many confused relations). Perhaps I might have said something more, but just then the door banged shut and the professor in his blue dress-coat bowed and hastily ascended the platform.

Nevertheless, when I was in need of the lecture notes shortly before the examination, Operov, remembering his promise, offered me his and tendered an invitation to study with him.

Chapter 37

AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

Affairs of the heart occupied a good deal of my time that winter. I was in love three times. The first time, I fell

[1] Boors.

passionately in love with a very buxom lady who rode in Freitag's riding academy, and, consequently, every Tuesday and Friday, the days on which she rode, I went there to gaze at her, but being constantly in dread lest she notice me, I stood so far away from her and fled so quickly from the place where she was to pass, and turned away so nonchalantly when she chanced to glance in my direction that I actually never saw her face properly, and to this day do not know whether she was indeed pretty or not.

Dubkov, who knew the lady, coming upon me one day in the riding academy where I lurked behind the footmen and the fur wraps they were holding, and having learned from Dmitry of my infatuation, threw me into such a panic by offering to introduce me to my Amazon that I bolted from the academy; imagining that he had told her about me, I never dared venture there again, not even as far as the footmen's row, for fear of meeting her.

Whenever I chanced to be in love with women whom I did not know, and especially with married women, I was overcome by shyness a thousand times worse than what I had experienced with Sonichka. I dreaded nothing in the world so much as that the object of my love should learn of my passion, or even of my existence. It seemed to me that were she to know of my feelings for her, it would be an affront so grave that she would never forgive me. Indeed, had my Amazon known the particulars, as I watched her from behind the footmen's backs, imagining that I should carry her off, take her to live in my country house and picturing exactly what I should do with her there, she might perhaps with justice have been quite outraged. However, I did not realize that by merely making my acquaintance she would not suddenly discover all my thoughts about her, and that there could, therefore, be nothing shameful in simply being introduced to her.

Then I fell in love with Sonichka when she came to visit my sister. My second period of being in love with her was a thing of the past, but I fell in love a third time after Lyubochka gave me an album of poems copied out by Sonichka in which many eerily passionate passages from

Lermontov's "The Demon" were underlined in red ink and marked with pressed flowers. Remembering that Volodya had the year before kissed his lady-love's purse, I essayed to do the same; indeed, when alone in my room one evening, I began to muse, gazing at one of the flowers and touching it to my lips, and was overcome by an agreeably tearful emotion. Once again I was in love, or believed myself to be so for some few days.

And, at last, I fell in love for the third time that winter with a young lady with whom Volodya was in love and who visited our house. As I now recall, there was nothing at all enchanting about this young lady, at least nothing of the kind that usually appealed to me. She was the daughter of an educated woman, a well-known Moscow intellectual, and was small, thin, with long fair locks after the English fashion and a limpid profile. Everyone said that the young lady was even more intelligent and better educated than her mother; I, however, was in no way able to judge of this, as, feeling a rather servile awe of her intellect and her scholarship, I spoke to her only once, and even then with unaccountable trepidation. But the enthusiasm of Volodya, who was never deterred by the presence of others from expressing his delight, communicated itself to me so forcefully that I fell passionately in love with the young lady. Sensing that Volodya would be displeased at the news that *two dear little brothers were in love with the same maiden*, I did not tell him of my love. On the contrary, I derived the greatest pleasure from this feeling, from the thought that our love was so pure that though the object of it was one and the same charming creature, we should remain friends and be prepared, if necessary, to sacrifice our love for one another. However, as to a readiness for self-sacrifice, I suspect that Volodya did not quite share my views, being so passionately in love that he intended to slap a diplomat and challenge him to a duel when he heard that the man was engaged to her. I, for my part, gladly sacrificed my love, perhaps because it cost me no great effort, as I had had only one affected conversation with the young lady on the merits of classical music, and my love, try as I did to sustain it, expired within a week.

Chapter 38

SOCIETY CIRCLES

I was quite disappointed that winter in the social pleasures to which, on entering the University, I had dreamed of devoting myself in imitation of my elder brother. Volodya danced a great deal and Papa, too, frequented balls with his young wife; but I was apparently considered either too young or unsuited for these pleasures, and no one introduced me in the houses where balls were given. Notwithstanding my promise to be frank with Dmitry, I did not tell him or anyone else how I longed to go to balls and how pained and vexed I was at being left out and evidently regarded by others as some sort of a philosopher, which I consequently pretended to be.

But that winter Princess Kornakova gave a ball. She came herself to invite us all, including me, and I was to go to a ball for the first time. Before starting out, Volodya came to my room to see what I would wear. I was much surprised and puzzled by his doing so. It seemed to me that the desire to be well dressed was a most shameful one and ought to be concealed; he, however, considered this desire so natural and essential that he told me quite frankly he was afraid I might bring disgrace upon myself. He told me to be sure to put on my patent leather boots and was horrified that I intended to wear suède gloves; he arranged my watch in a particular way and took me off to the barber on Kuznetsky Bridge Street. My hair was curled. Volodya stepped back and surveyed me from a distance.

"Yes, now it is good, but can nothing be done to hold those tufts down?" he said to the barber.

But however much M. Charles greased my tufts with some sticky substance, they still stood on end when I put on my hat and, on the whole, my appearance with curled hair seemed to me even worse. My only salvation lay in affecting nonchalance. Only thus might my appearance be tolerable.

Volodya was evidently of the same opinion, for he asked me to brush out the curls. When I had done so and

it was still not right, he did not look at me any more, but was silent and depressed all the way to the Kornakovs'.

Arriving at the Kornakovs', I entered boldly at Volodya's side, but when the princess asked me to dance and I for some reason said I did not dance, though I had set out with the sole intention of dancing incessantly, I was abashed and, finding myself alone among strangers, lapsed into my customary state of insuperable and ever mounting shyness. I stood dumbly in one spot the whole evening.

During a waltz one of the younger princesses came up to me and with the formal courtesy common to the entire family asked me why I was not dancing. I remember my alarm at the question, yet at the same time, and quite involuntarily, a self-satisfied smile spread over my face and I began to utter, in the most pompous French and using many auxiliary phrases, such nonsense as even now, dozens of years later, I am still ashamed to remember. That is apparently how the music affected me, exciting my nerves and, as I imagined, drowning out the rather incoherent portion of my remarks. I said something about high society, about man's inanity and woman's, in particular, and at last babbled myself into such confusion that I stopped short in the middle of a word in some phrase I could never have completed.

Even the princess, with her innate social tact, was embarrassed and looked at me reproachfully. I was smiling. At this critical moment Volodya, who had noticed that I was speaking warmly and evidently wished to know how I was making up in conversation for not dancing, approached with Dubkov. When he saw my smiling face and the princess's alarmed expression and heard the frightful nonsense of my concluding words he reddened and turned away. The princess rose and left me. Still, I smiled, though I suffered such agonies at that moment from the consciousness of my folly that I was ready to sink through the floor and was overcome by a desire to move about and say something, to somehow alter the situation. I went up to Dubkov and asked whether he had danced many waltzes with *her*. I was ostensibly being playful and jovial, while actually I was imploring help

from that very Dubkov to whom I had shouted: "Hold your tongue!" at the dinner at The Yar. Dubkov pretended not to hear and turned away. I drew nearer to Volodya and with a desperate effort, attempting to make my voice sound bantering again, I said: "Well now, Volodya, are you *winded?*" But Volodya looked at me, as though to say: "You never speak to me like this when we're alone", and moved silently away, seemingly in dread that I might tag along.

"My God, my own brother is deserting me!" I thought.

Somehow, however, I lacked the resolution to leave. I stayed on till the end, standing sullenly in one spot, and only when everyone was departing and crowding into the front hall, and the footman, in helping me on with my greatcoat, caught the brim of my hat, tilting it upward, did I laugh painfully through my tears and, addressing no one in particular, remark: "*Comme c'est gracieux*".[1]

Chapter 39

THE CAROUSAL

Although, under Dmitry's influence, I had never yet given myself up to the common student pastime known as *drinking parties*, I had occasion that winter to take part in one such affair, and I carried away from it an impression that was not altogether pleasant. It happened like this. During a lecture at the beginning of the year Baron Z., a tall, fair-haired young man with regular features and an extremely grave expression, invited us all to a supper party at his home. All of us meant all the more or less *comme il faut* first-year students among whom, obviously, neither Grap, Semyonov, Operov, nor any others of that rather shabby lot were included. Volodya smiled disdainfully when he learned that I was going to a freshman drinking party; but expecting some great and extraordinary pleasure from this as yet novel pastime, I arrived at Baron Z.'s punctually at the appointed hour of eight.

[1] How elegant this is.

Baron Z., with his frock-coat unbuttoned over a white waistcoat, was receiving his guests in the brightly-lit salon and drawing room of the small house in which his parents lived; they had let him have the reception rooms for the evening's festivities. I caught sight of the skirts and heads of inquisitive maids in the passage and in the pantry had a glimpse of the gown of a lady whom I took to be the baroness herself. There were about twenty guests, all students, except Herr Frost, who had come together with Ivin, and a tall, ruddy-faced civilian who was acting as the master of ceremonies and who was introduced to everyone as a relation of the baron's and a former student of Dorpat University. The excessive illumination and the usual formal furnishing of the reception rooms at first had such a dampening effect on the youthful company that everyone involuntarily hugged the walls, except for a few bold fellows and the former Dorpat student who had already unbuttoned his waistcoat and appeared to be in both rooms at once and in every corner of each room, filling, so it seemed, the whole room with his resonant, pleasant tenor voice. The other students, however, were mostly silent or conversed in low tones about the professors, their studies, examinations and serious and uninteresting subjects in general. All without exception glanced continually at the pantry door, and though they attempted to conceal this, their looks seemed to say: "Well, it is high time they began." I, too, felt that it was high time to begin and awaited *the beginning* with impatient joy.

After tea, which the footmen handed round among the guests, the Dorpat student asked Frost in Russian:

"Can you make punch, Frost?"

"*O ja!*"[1] Frost replied, flexing his calves, but the Dorpat student said, again in Russian:

"Then take the matter in hand." (They were on such familiar terms because they had been classmates at Dorpat University.) And Frost, with giant strides of his muscular legs, began moving from drawing room to pantry and from pantry to drawing room, and soon there appeared on the table a large tureen with a ten-pound

[1] Oh, yes.

sugar loaf set above it on three crossed students' swords. Baron Z., meanwhile, in turn approached his guests, who had all now assembled in the drawing room and were staring at the tureen, and with an immutably grave face repeated almost the same words to each of them: "Come, gentlemen, let us drink a student round to mark our *Bruderschaft*,[1] because there is no comradeship at all in our set. And do unbutton your coats or take them off altogether, as he has done." Indeed, the Dorpat student had taken off his frock-coat, turned up his white shirtsleeves above his white elbows and, having planted his feet firmly apart, was igniting the rum in the tureen.

"Gentlemen! Snuff out the candles!" the Dorpat student suddenly shouted as loudly as one might have had to shout, had we all been shouting. We all stood staring silently at the tureen and the Dorpat student's white shirt and felt that the solemn moment had arrived.

"*Löschen sie die Lichter aus*,[2] Frost!" the Dorpat student shouted again, this time in German, having evidently become overly excited. Frost and all the rest of us began extinguishing the candles. The room grew dark, with only the white shirtsleeves and the hands supporting the sugar loaf on the swords lit up by a bluish flame. The Dorpat student's loud tenor was no longer the one voice to be heard, for in every corner of the room there was talking and laughter. Many took off their frock-coats (especially those who wore fine and perfectly clean shirts), I did the same and realized that *it had begun*. Though nothing amusing had as yet occurred, I was firmly convinced that everything would be splendid after we had each had a cup of the beverage that was now in preparation.

The drink was ready. The Dorpat student ladled the punch into punch cups, spilling a considerable amount on the table, and shouted: "Now then, gentlemen, let us drink!" When each of us had taken one of the brimming, sticky cups, the Dorpat student and Frost began singing a German song in which the exclamation *Juche!*[3] was oft

[1] Brotherhood.
[2] Put out the candles.
[3] Hooray.

repeated. We all joined in discordantly, began touching cups, shouting, praising the punch and, with arms linked or not, began drinking the sweet, strong liquid. Now there was nothing more to wait for: the carousal was in full swing. I had already downed a full cup of punch, my cup was refilled, my temples throbbed, the flames seemed blood-red to me, and all around there was laughter and shouting, yet not only was I bored, but I was quite convinced that all the others were also bored, and that for some reason they also considered it necessary to pretend that we were having a riotous time. The Dorpat student was perhaps the only one who did not pretend; he was growing more and more ruddy and omnipresent and kept refilling the empty cups, spilling more and more on the table, which had by now become all sticky and sweet. I do not remember the precise sequence of events, but I do remember that in the course of the evening I was quite fond of the Dorpat student and Frost, and attempted to learn the German song by heart, and kissed them both on their sticky-sweet lips; I also remember that during that same evening I took a violent dislike to the Dorpat student and was on the point of throwing a chair at him, but restrained myself; I also remember that apart from the feeling of having lost all control of my limbs, which I had experienced the day we had dined at The Yar, my head so ached and swam that evening that I was terrified of dying then and there; I also remember that for some reason we all sat down on the floor and swung our arms, pretending to row, and sang "Down the River, Down the Volga", and that I thought at the time that it was quite unnecessary to do so; I also remember that, lying on the floor, I wrestled Gypsy fashion, with legs locked, putting someone's neck out of joint and thinking that this would not have happened, had he not been drunk; I also remember that we had supper and drank something else, that I went out into the courtyard to refresh myself, and my head felt cold, and that, on leaving, I noticed that it was dreadfully dark, that the step of my droshky had become slanted and slippery, and that I could not hold on to Kuzma, because he had grown weak and was as limp as a rag; but above all, I remember that throughout the

evening I continually felt I was acting most foolishly by pretending to be vastly amused, to be fond of drinking heavily and to be quite sober, and I continually felt that the others were also acting very foolishly by pretending the same. It seemed to me that each one of them privately felt uncomfortable, as I did, but imagining that he alone experienced such a disagreeable feeling, each one considered himself duty-bound to feign joviality, so as not to spoil the general merriment; moreover, strange to say, I felt myself obliged to keep up the pretense, if only because there had gone into the tureen three bottles of champagne, at ten rubles each, and ten bottles of rum, at four rubles each, which came to seventy rubles, not counting the cost of the supper. I was so convinced of this that at the lecture the next day I was amazed to see that those of my fellow students who had been at Baron Z.'s party, far from feeling ashamed of recalling what they had done, spoke of the affair so that the other students might hear. They said it had been a most splendid carousal, that the Dorpat men were fine at that sort of thing, that the twenty of us had drunk forty bottles of rum and that many had been left dead drunk under the tables. I could not understand why they not only spoke of it, but slandered themselves as well.

Chapter 40

FRIENDSHIP WITH THE NEKHLYUDOVS

That winter I saw a great deal not only of Dmitry, who was a frequent visitor at our house, but of his entire family, with whom I had begun to grow intimate.

The Nekhlyudovs, mother, aunt and daughter, spent their evenings at home, and the princess enjoyed the company of young men of the sort, as she expressed it, who could spend an entire evening without cards or dancing. But apparently there were few such men, because I, who visited them almost every evening, seldom met any other

visitors there. I had grown accustomed to the members of this family, to their various dispositions, had formed a clear idea of their mutual relations, was familiar with the rooms and furnishings and, when there were no visitors, felt quite at ease, except on those occasions when I found myself alone with Varenka. It seemed to me then that she, not being a very attractive girl, would have much liked me to fall in love with her. However, I was beginning to get over this awkwardness, too. She so naturally made it clear that it was all the same to her whether she talked to me, to her brother or to Lyubov Sergeyevna, that I also assumed the habit of looking upon her simply as a person to whom one might express the pleasure one took in her company, without feeling ashamed or endangered. During the period of our acquaintance she seemed to me on some days very plain and on others not at all unattractive; yet, I had never once asked myself whether I was in love with her or not. I had occasion to speak to her directly, but more often I conversed with her through Lyubov Sergeyevna or through Dmitry and was especially pleased with this latter method. I derived true delight in discoursing in her presence, in listening to her sing and, generally, in being aware of her presence in the room; but the thought of what my relations with Varenka might later be and my daydreams of sacrificing my love for my friend, should he fall in love with my sister, now scarcely ever entered my head. And if such daydreams and thoughts did occur to me, then, feeling content with the present, I unconsciously attempted to banish all thought of the future.

Notwithstanding this intimacy, I still considered it my infallible duty to conceal from all the Nekhlyudovs, and especially from Varenka, my genuine feelings and inclinations and endeavored to appear quite different than what I was in reality and, indeed, as no young man could possibly have been. I wished to seem passionate, went into raptures, exclaimed and made impassioned gestures when I feigned particular pleasure in something, yet, at the same time, endeavored to appear unmoved by any unusual occurrence I chanced to witness or hear of; I endeavored to seem a heartless cynic to whom nothing was

sacred, yet, at the same time, a sensitive observer; I endeavored to appear logical in all my actions, precise and methodical in my way of life, yet loathing all material things. I can confidently say that I was far better in reality than that strange creature I made myself out to be; but even in such a guise as I appeared to them, the Nekhlyudovs grew very fond of me and, to my good fortune, they evidently saw through my pretense. Lyubov Sergeyevna alone considered me to be the worst of egotists, impious and a cynic; she appeared to dislike me and often argued with me, growing angry and baffling me by her abrupt and disconnected remarks. But Dmitry retained the same strange and more than friendly relations with her, saying that no one understood her, and that she had an extremely good influence on him. His friendship for her still continued to distress the entire family.

Once Varenka, in talking to me about this strange attachment which we none of us could understand, explained it thus:

"Dmitry is conceited. He is too proud, and for all his cleverness he loves praise and admiration, he loves always to be first, and *Auntie*, in the innocence of her heart, is overawed by him and has not sufficient common sense to conceal this awe, and so she flatters him in all sincerity, not hypocritically."

This observation was impressed upon my mind, and on considering it afterwards, I could not help thinking that Varenka was extremely clever and, therefore, was pleased to elevate her in my estimation. Yet, though I was pleased to elevate her thus in consequence of my discovery that she possessed a mind and other moral qualities, I did so with rather strict moderation and never reached a state of admiration, the ultimate stage of this elevation. Therefore, when Sofia Ivanovna, who never wearied of talking about her niece, told me that four years before, when they had been living in the country and Varenka was still a child, she had given all her clothes and shoes to the peasant children without asking permission, so that they had to be taken back afterwards, I did not at once accept this fact as being significant enough to raise her in my esteem and

even scoffed at her in my mind for having such an impractical view of things.

When the Nekhlyudovs had visitors, and occasionally Volodya and Dubkov among others, I retired to the background with the calm assurance of the power I wielded as a friend of the family, not talking, but merely listening to what the others said. And everything the others said seemed to me so incredibly foolish that I wondered how such a clever, sensible woman as the princess and how her entire sensible family could listen to such foolishness and respond to it. Had it then occurred to me to compare what the others said with what I myself said when I was there alone, I should certainly not have been so astonished. Still less should I have wondered had I believed that the ladies of my own family circle, Avdotia Vasilyevna, Lyubochka and Katenka, were just like any others and not at all inferior; had I remembered that Dubkov, Katenka and Avdotia Vasilyevna had talked and smiled happily for whole evenings on end; and that Dubkov, on some pretext, would almost always recite with feeling the verse: "*Au banquet de la vie, infortuné convive...*" or excerpts from "The Demon", and, in general, had I recalled with what pleasure they could talk sheer nonsense for hours on end. Naturally, when there were visitors Varenka paid less attention to me than when we were alone, and then there was none of the reading aloud or the music which I so loved. When conversing with them she lost what was for me her principal charm: her quiet good sense and simplicity. I remember how oddly her conversations with my brother Volodya about the theater and the weather struck me. I knew that Volodya shunned and despised commonplaces above all else; Varenka, too, always made fun of the supposedly entertaining conversations about the weather, and so forth: why then, when they met, did they both continually utter the most insufferable commonplaces and seem to be ashamed for one another? Always after such conversations I would rage inwardly at Varenka, and the next day I would make fun of the previous day's guests, though I felt more pleased than ever to be alone in the Nekhlyudov family circle.

Be that as it may, I began taking greater pleasure in joining Dmitry in his mother's drawing room than in being alone with him.

Chapter 41

FRIENDSHIP WITH NEKHLYUDOV

At that time it came to pass that my friendship with Dmitry hung by a thread. I had been regarding him critically for too long to be blind to his shortcomings, and since in early youth we only love passionately, we therefore love only those who are perfect. But as soon as the mist of passion begins little by little to lift, or the clear rays of reason involuntarily begin to pierce it and we perceive the object of our adoration in his true light, with his virtues and shortcomings, his shortcomings strike us vividly, with the exaggerated force of the unexpected; the feeling of attraction for what is new and the hope that perfection in someone else is not an impossibility incite us not only to coldness, but to repulsion for the former object of our devotion, and we desert him without regret and hasten on in search of new perfection. If this did not happen to me in regard to Dmitry, I attribute it only to his stubborn, pedantic attachment, more one of the mind than of the heart, to which I should have been too ashamed to be false. Moreover, we were bound by our strange rule of frankness. We dreaded, should we part, leaving in one another's keeping the shared moral secrets of which we were ashamed. However, we were aware that our rule of frankness had long been disregarded and often embarrassed us, and occasioned peculiar relations between us.

Almost every time I came to see Dmitry that winter I found Bezobedov there, a fellow-student with whom he studied. Bezobedov was a small, thin, pock-marked little man with tiny freckled hands and a mass of unkempt red hair, forever tattered and slovenly, uncouth and even poor at his studies. Dmitry's friendship with him, as with Lyu-

bov Sergeyevna, was incomprehensible to me. The sole reason he had singled him out from among all his fellow-students to be his friend might have been that there was no more ill-favored student in the University than Bezobedov. This was evidently exactly why it pleased Dmitry to ignore popular opinion and extend him his friendship. In all his relations with this student this lofty feeling was expressed: "There, now, it is all the same to me who you are, you are all equal to me, and I am fond of him, which means that he is good, too."

I marvelled that he was not depressed by continually having to constrain himself and wondered how the unfortunate Bezobedov could endure his awkward situation. I disliked this friendship in the extreme.

Once I called on Dmitry to spend the evening with him in his mother's drawing room, talking and listening to Varenka sing or read, but Bezobedov was sitting with him upstairs. Dmitry said curtly that he could not go downstairs since, as I could see, he had a visitor.

"And what is so amusing there?" he added. "It is far better to sit here and chat." Though I was not at all inspired by the thought of wasting several hours with Bezobedov, I did not venture to go down to the drawing room alone and, feeling vexed in my heart at my friend's eccentricities, I seated myself in the rocking chair and began to rock in silence. I was quite annoyed at Dmitry and Bezobedov for depriving me of the pleasure of being downstairs; I waited, hoping Bezobedov would leave, and raged at him and at Dmitry, a silent participant in their conversation. "A splendid visitor, indeed! And I must sit here with him!" I said to myself when the footman brought in tea and Dmitry was obliged to ask Bezobedov at least five times to have a glass, because the timid guest considered it incumbent on him to decline the first and second offers of tea, saying: "No, you have some." Dmitry, with an obvious effort, engaged his visitor in conversation into which he vainly and repeatedly tried to draw me. I preserved a sullen silence.

"There is no need to put on a face that says: Let no one dare suspect that I am bored," I mentally addressed Dmitry, while rocking back and forth measuredly. With

a certain satisfaction I fanned higher and higher the flame of my subdued enmity towards my friend. "What a fool," I thought. "He might be spending a pleasant evening with his charming family, but no, he sits here with this beast; time is passing, and it will soon be too late to go down to the drawing room", and I cast repeated glances at my friend from behind the edge of my chair. His hand, his attitude, his neck, and particularly the nape of it, and his knees all seemed so disgusting and offensive to me that I would at that moment have enjoyed doing something to annoy him.

At last, Bezobedov rose, but Dmitry could not at once let such a welcome visitor leave; he proposed that he stay the night, which Bezobedov fortunately declined and then departed.

After seeing him out, Dmitry returned with a faint, complacent smile and rubbing his hands, no doubt because he had maintained his character to the end, and partly because he had at last escaped boredom; he began pacing the room, casting an occasional glance in my direction. He seemed even more detestable to me. "How dare he walk about and smile?" I said to myself.

"Why are you so cross?" he suddenly asked, stopping short in front of me.

"I am not at all cross," I replied, as one always does on such occasions, "I am merely vexed that you dissimulate to me and to Bezobedov, and to yourself."

"What nonsense! I never dissimulate to anyone."

"I have not forgotten our rule of frankness, and I speak to you openly. I am certain," said I, "that Bezobedov is insufferable to you, as he is to me, because he's a fool, and heaven only knows what else, but it gives you pleasure to put on airs for his sake."

"No! In the first place, Bezobedov is a splendid man..."

"But I say it's so. I will even tell you that your friendship for Lyubov Sergeyevna is also based on the fact that she regards you as a god."

"I tell you it's not so."

"And I say it is, because I know it from my own experience," I replied with the warmth of repressed vexation and hoping to disarm him by my frankness. "I have told

you and now repeat: I always imagine I am fond of those who say things that are pleasing to me, but when I examine the matter closely I find that there is no real attachment."

"No," Dmitry insisted, adjusting his cravat with an irritable jerk of his neck. "When I am fond of someone neither praise nor abuse can change my feelings."

"That's not true; remember, I confessed that when Papa called me a good-for-nothing I hated him for a while and wished he were dead; the same is true of you..."

"Speak for yourself. It's a great pity if you're really like this..."

"On the contrary," I cried, springing up from the chair and looking straight at him with desperate courage, "you should not say that; did you not tell me about your cousin? I don't remind you of it, because it would be dishonorable; did you not tell me... I will tell you what I think of you now!"

And in an effort to wound him even more painfully than he had wounded me, I set out to prove to him that he loved no one and to tell him everything I imagined I had a right to reproach him about. I was very pleased at having told him all, quite forgetting that the only possible aim in doing this, that he might acknowledge the shortcomings of which I had accused him, could not have been attained at a time when he was so agitated, though I had never spoken to him of this when he was in a tranquil state of mind and might have admitted it.

The dispute was verging on a quarrel when Dmitry suddenly fell silent and left me to go into the adjoining room. I was on the point of following him and went on speaking, but he did not reply. I knew that "irascibility" was set down in his list of faults and that he was now making an effort to master himself. I cursed all his lists.

So this is what our rule *to tell each other all that was in our hearts and never say anything to a third party about one another* had brought us to. Carried away by our frankness, we had sometimes gone so far as to make the most humiliating confessions, passing off, to our shame, supposition and idle dreams as desires and feelings, as, for

instance, what I had just now told him; and these confessions, far from drawing closer the ties that bound us, had dissipated the very feeling itself and alienated us; and now, suddenly, his pride would not allow him to make the most trivial admission, and in the heat of our argument we had employed the weapons which we had previously entrusted to one another and which inflicted such painful wounds.

Chapter 42

THE STEPMOTHER

Although Papa had not intended to come to Moscow with his wife before the New Year, he arrived in October, in autumn, while it was still possible to have good hunting to hounds. Papa said that he had changed his plans, because a lawsuit of his was coming up in the Senate, but Mimi told us that Avdotia Vasilyevna had found it so dull in the country, had so often spoken about Moscow and had feigned illness so persistently that Papa had decided to comply with her wish.

"Because she never loved him, but only spoke incessantly to everyone of her love, hoping to marry a rich man," Mimi added with a pensive sigh, as though to say: "It's not at all what *some people* would have done for him, had he been capable of appreciating them."

Some people were unjust to Avdotia Vasilyevna; her love for Papa, the passionate, devoted love of the self-denying kind, was apparent in her every word, look and gesture. Yet, such love did not prevent her, together with a wish never to leave her adored husband's side, from longing for a darling cap from Madame Annette's, a hat with a darling light-blue ostrich feather and a blue gown of Venetian velvet which would artfully set off her fine white bosom and arms, revealed to no one until then save her husband and the maids. Katenka naturally sided with her mother, while between our stepmother and us there had at once, from the very day of her arrival, become

established somewhat strange, bantering relations. As she alighted from the carriage, Volodya, putting on a grave face and affecting a vacant look, clicked his heels, approached with a rolling gait, kissed her hand and said, as though introducing someone:

"It gives me great pleasure to welcome our dear mother and to kiss her hand."

"Ah, my dear little son!" said Avdotia Vasilyevna, smiling her lovely, unchanging smile.

"And pray do not forget your other little son," said I, also approaching to kiss her hand and involuntarily attempting to assume Volodya's expression of face and voice.

If we two and our stepmother could have been sure of mutual attachment this facial expression might have signified disdain for demonstrative displays of affection; had we already been ill-disposed towards one another, it might have signified irony, or contempt for pretense, or a desire to conceal our true relations from our father, who was also present, and many other thoughts and feelings as well; but in the present instance this expression, which was quite in keeping with Avdotia Vasilyevna's own nature, indicated nothing at all and merely concealed the absence of any relations. Afterwards, I was often to observe in other families such bantering, contrived relations when their members suspected that their real relations would not be altogether satisfactory, and just such relations were involuntarily established between Avdotia Vasilyevna and us. We scarcely ever departed from them, were always factitiously polite to her, spoke French, clicked our heels and called her *chère maman*, to which she always responded with a jest in the same spirit and with the same lovely, unchanging smile. Tearful Lyubochka, with her bowlegs and guileless chatter, was the only one who came to love our stepmother and quite naively and at times awkwardly attempted to draw her closer to the rest of the family, so that the only person in the world for whom Avdotia Vasilyevna had even a scrap of affection, apart from her passionate love for Papa, was Lyubochka. Avdotia Vasilyevna even exhibited an awed wonder and shy respect for her which quite amazed me.

At first, when speaking of herself as a stepmother, Avdotia Vasilyevna often mentioned that children and the household always look upon a stepmother with unjust hostility, thus making her position extremely difficult. Yet, foreseeing all the unpleasantness of her position, she did nothing to avoid it: a caress for one, a gift for another and not being querulous, which would have come quite easily to her, as she was by nature undemanding and truly kind. And not only did she do none of this but, on the contrary, foreseeing all the unpleasantness of her position, she prepared for defense without having been attacked, and presuming that the entire household were determined to make things disagreeable for her and to insult her, she saw evil design in everything and imagined it would be most dignified if she were to suffer in silence. Naturally, this inactivity of hers won her no love, but did gain her considerable ill-will. Moreover, she was so lacking in that capacity for understanding, developed to such a high degree in our family and to which I have already alluded, and her ways were so contrary to those which had become established in our home that this in itself caused us to be ill-disposed towards her. In our orderly, well-kept house she lived as though she had only just arrived: she rose and retired now early, now late; sometimes she came down to dinner, sometimes she did not; one evening she took supper, another she did not. If there were no visitors, she almost always went about in dishabille and was not ashamed to show herself to us and even to the servants in a white petticoat with a shawl thrown over her shoulders and her arms bare. At first, this artlessness appealed to me, but then, and very soon, as a result of this artlessness I lost any respect I had for her. It amazed us even more to see that there were two quite different women in her, according to whether we had or did not have visitors. In company she was a healthy young beauty, extravagantly dressed, neither clever nor foolish, but full of good cheer; the other, when we were alone, was a woman no longer young, weary, depressed, slovenly and bored, though loving. Often, seeing her when she returned smiling from a call, rosy-cheeked from the winter frost, happy in the consciousness of her beauty

and, taking off her hat, went up to look at herself in the glass, or rustling her magnificent, low-necked ball gown, abashed, yet proud before the servants, she passed to her carriage, or at home, when we had small supper parties and she, wearing a high-necked silk gown with some fine lace around her delicate throat flashed her unchanging but lovely smile all around, I wondered as I looked at her: what would they say, those who were in raptures about her, were they to see her as I saw her on the evenings when she stayed at home, clad in a morning dress, her hair unbrushed, moving through the dimly-lit rooms like a wraith, waiting up till after midnight for her husband to return from his club. Now she would go to the piano and, frowning from the effort, play the one waltz she knew, now she would pick up a novel, read a few lines from the middle and lay it aside; now, not to wake the servants, she would repair to the pantry, get herself a sour pickle and some cold veal and eat it, standing by the pantry window; now again, sad and weary, she would wander aimlessly from room to room. But what truly alienated us from her was her lack of understanding, expressed chiefly in her habit of indulgent attention when one spoke to her of things she did not understand. She was not to blame for having acquired an unconscious habit of smiling faintly with her lips alone and inclining her head when told things that were of little interest to her (and apart from her husband and herself nothing was of interest to her); but this smile and inclination of the head, oft-repeated, were insufferable. Her mirth, as though she laughed at herself, at you and at the whole world, was also awkward and did not communicate itself to anyone; her sensibility was too artful. But, chiefly, she was not ashamed to speak continually to any and all of her love for Papa. Though she spoke the truth when she said that her love for her husband comprised her whole life, and though she proved this by her every thought and action, we found such frank, continual protestations of love revolting and were even more ashamed of her when she spoke thus in the presence of strangers than when she made mistakes in French.

She loved her husband to distraction, and her husband

loved her, especially at first, and when he saw that others, too, were attracted to her. Her sole aim in life was to win her husband's love, yet she seemed, as though on purpose, to do everything that would most likely be disagreeable to him, and all this to prove to him the strength of her passion and her readiness to sacrifice herself.

She loved fine clothes, and my father liked to see her as a society beauty who excited praise and admiration; yet, she sacrificed her love of finery for my father's sake and more and more took to sitting at home in a gray blouse. Papa, who had always considered freedom and equality essential conditions of family relations, had hoped that his pet, Lyubochka, and his good-natured young wife would become true friends; but Avdotia Vasilyevna abnegated herself and found it necessary to treat *the real mistress of the house*, as she called Lyubochka, with undue respect, which stung Papa to the quick. He gambled a great deal that winter, lost much towards the end but, as always, not wishing to bring his card-playing into his home life, concealed his gambling affairs from the family. Avdotia Vasilyevna abnegated herself, and though at times ill and even, towards the end of the winter, expecting, considered it her duty to come waddling forth in her gray blouse with her hair in disarray to meet Papa when he returned from his club, whether at four or five o'clock in the morning, having lost heavily and shamefaced at having had to pay an eighth fine.[1] She would ask him absently whether he had been lucky and would smile indulgently and nod as she listened to what he told her of his doings at the club and begged her for the hundredth time never to wait up for him. But though his winnings and losses, on which, at the stakes for which he played, Papa's fortune depended, did not interest her at all, she would again be the first to meet him every night when he returned from his club. However, apart from her passion for self-sacrifice, a secret jealousy, from which she suffered in the highest degree, impelled her to wait up for him. No one in the world could have convinced her that Papa was return-

[1] It was customary to exact a fine from those who stayed on at a club after midnight, with the fine doubled every half-hour.- *Tr.*

ing so late from his club and not from some mistress. She attempted to read Papa's love-secrets in his face, and deciphering nothing, sighed with a certain pleasure in her grief and gave herself up to the contemplation of her misery.

In consequence of this and innumerable other sacrifices, there became noticeable in Papa's attitude towards his wife during the last months of that winter, in which he had lost heavily and was therefore generally in a bad humor, an intermittent feeling of *silent hatred*, of that suppressed aversion for the object of one's affections which is expressed in an involuntary desire to inflict on that object every kind of petty annoyance.

Chapter 43

NEW FRIENDS

The winter passed imperceptibly, and it was beginning to thaw again, and in the University they had put up a schedule of the examinations when I suddenly remembered that I should be examined in the eighteen subjects I had attended and of which I had not listened to, taken notes of or prepared a single one. It was strange that such a simple question as: how will I pass the examinations?—had not once occurred to me. But all that winter I had been in such a daze, arising from my delight in being grown up and *comme il faut*, that when the question: how will I pass the examinations?—did enter my mind I compared myself with my fellow-students and said to myself: "Well, they will take the examinations, too, and most of them are not even *comme il faut*, which means I have an advantage over them and am bound to pass." I attended the lectures only because it had become a habit and because Papa sent me out of the house. Moreover, I had many acquaintances now and often enjoyed myself at the University. I liked the noise, the talk and the laughter in the auditorium; sitting in the back row during a lecture, I liked to daydream and observe my fellow-students to the accompaniment of the measured tones of the professor's voice; I liked to dash out with someone to Matern's occasionally for a drink of vodka and a snack and, knowing

that I might be reprimanded for it, to enter the auditorium after the professor, opening the creaking door timidly; I liked to take part in some prank, when one year's class would jostle another in the corridor. All this was very jolly.

When everyone had begun to attend the lectures more regularly and the professor of physics had completed his course and had taken leave of us until the examinations, the students began to put their notes in order and to prepare in groups, and I, too, decided I ought to begin preparing. Operov, with whom I continued to exchange greetings, but remained on the coolest terms, as I have already mentioned, not only offered me his notes, but invited me to prepare for the examinations together with him and some other students. I thanked him and accepted, hoping by this honor I did him to completely erase our former misunderstanding, requesting, however, that everyone should without fail always meet at my house, as I had good quarters.

I was told that they would study in turn, now at one student's house, now at another's, whichever was closest. The first time, we met at Zukhin's house. It was a small room behind a partition in a large house on Trubny Boulevard. I was late the first day and arrived after they had begun the reading. The small room was blue with smoke, and not even *Seegras*, but *makhorka*, which was what Zukhin smoked. On the table were a square bottle of vodka, a wineglass, some bread, salt and a mutton bone.

Zukhin, without rising, offered me a drink and suggested I take off my frock-coat.

"I imagine you're not accustomed to such fare," he added.

All wore grubby chintz shirts and dickeys. Endeavoring not to show the contempt I felt for them, I took off my frock-coat and leaned back in a *comradely* fashion on the sofa. Zukhin, casting an occasional glance at his notes, was speaking; the others interrupted him to ask questions, and he would explain the point clearly, concisely and intelligently. I began to listen, and as there was much I did not understand, not knowing what had gone before, I asked a question.

"Eh, my good man, there's no sense in your listening if you don't know that," said Zukhin. "I will give you the notes, and you read them over by tomorrow; otherwise, it's no use explaining it all to you."

I felt ashamed of my ignorance and, appreciating the justice of his remark, I left off listening and occupied myself by observing these new acquaintances. According to my classification of people into the *comme il faut* and the not *comme il faut*, these evidently belonged to the second category and, consequently, inspired in me not only a feeling of scorn, but a certain personal hostility as well, because, not being *comme il faut*, they not only seemed to regard themselves as my equals, but even patronized me in a good-natured way. This feeling was inspired in me by the sight of their feet and dirty hands with the gnawed nails and one long nail on Operov's pinky, and their dickeys and pink shirts, and the abuse which they affectionately flung at one another, and the dirty room, and Zukhin's habit of continually blowing his nose slightly by pressing a finger to his nostril, and especially by their manner of speaking, of employing and stressing certain words; for instance, they used the words: *dolt* instead of fool, *as it were* instead of as though, *magnificent* instead of splendid, *motorial*, and so forth, which seemed to me bookish and disgustingly ill-bred. But my *comme il faut* hatred was even more excited by the stress which they placed on some Russian and particularly some foreign words: they said máchine instead of machine, áctivity instead of activity, intentionálly instead of intentionally, Shakespéare instead of Shakespeare, and so on, and so forth.

However, despite these external features, which were unbearably repulsive to me at the time, and sensing something good in these people and envying the jovial comradeship which united them, I felt drawn to them and wished to become friends with them, difficult as it might have been for me to do. I already knew the gentle and upright Operov; now, however, the spirited and remarkably erudite Zukhin, who was evidently the leader of this circle, appealed to me in the extreme. He was short, sturdy and dark-haired, with a rather puffy and invariably

shiny, but exceedingly clever, lively and self-assured face. He owed this expression chiefly to his low forehead which, however, was prominent above his deep-set dark eyes, his short, bristly hair and the heavy black stubble on his chin which seemed never to be shaven. He appeared not to think of himself at all (something that particularly pleased me in people), and it was obvious that his mind was never idle. His was one of those expressive faces which, some hours after you first see them, suddenly change completely under your very eyes. Thus did Zukhin's face change under my eyes towards the end of the evening. All of a sudden new wrinkles appeared on his face, his eyes sank deeper, his smile seemed different and his entire countenance changed, so that I should hardly have recognized him.

When the reading was over Zukhin, the other students and I, to prove my readiness to be their comrade, each had a glass of vodka, leaving scarcely any in the square bottle. Zukhin asked if anyone had twenty-five kopecks, that he might send the old woman who served him for more vodka. I offered my money, but Zukhin, seeming not to hear me, turned to Operov, and Operov drew out a beaded purse and handed him the coin he had requested.

"Mind you don't go on a bender," said Operov, who did not drink at all.

"Never fear," Zukhin replied, sucking the marrow out of the mutton bone. (I remember thinking at the time: "So that is why he's so clever: he eats a lot of marrow.")

"Never fear," Zukhin went on, smiling faintly, and his smile was such that one could not help noticing it and feeling grateful to him for it. "Even if I do go on a bender, there's no harm in it; we shall see who confounds whom, whether he'll trip me up or I'll trip him up. It's all in here," he added, tapping his forehead boastfully. "Semyonov's the one who's in danger of failing; it seems he's been drinking hard."

Indeed, the very same gray-haired Semyonov who had so cheered me at the first examination by being so poorly-dressed and who, coming out second in the entrance examinations, had attended the lectures regularly during the first month of his university life, had given himself up to

drink before the review of the course had begun and, towards the end of the course, no longer showed up at the University at all.

"Where is he?" someone asked.

"I've quite lost sight of him," Zukhin continued. "The last time I saw him we smashed up The Lisbon. It was a magnificent business. I heard he was in a fight afterwards ... What a fellow! What fire there is in that man! What a mind! It'll be a pity if he goes under. And he certainly will go to the dogs: he's not mamma's little boy to stick it out in the University, not with his hot blood."

After talking for a while longer, everyone got up to leave, having agreed to meet in Zukhin's room on the following days as well, since his quarters were the most accessible. When we came out into the yard I felt rather ill at ease to be the only one with a droshky, when everyone else was on foot, and shamefacedly offered Operov a lift. Zukhin came outside with us and, borrowing a ruble from Operov, set off to make a night of it with some friends. On the way, Operov told me a good deal about Zukhin's character and way of life, and when I reached home I could not fall asleep for a long while, thinking about these new people I had come to know. I lay awake for hours, vacillating between respect for them, to which I was inclined by their knowledge, simplicity, honesty, poetry of youth and daring spirit, and the distaste which their ill-bred appearance inspired in me. Notwithstanding my ardent desire to do so, I found it quite impossible at the time to be on friendly terms with them. Our views were too dissimilar. There was an infinitude of shadings which constituted for me all the beauty and all the meaning of life that was quite incomprehensible to them, and vice versa. But what chiefly made friendship impossible were the twenty-ruble-a-meter cloth of my frock-coat, my droshky and my cambric shirt. This was of particular importance to me: I felt that I unwittingly offended them by the signs of my well-being. I felt guilty towards them and alternately humbled myself and rebelled at my undeserved humiliation: I assumed a self-assured air and was quite incapable of entering into equal, sincere relations with them. The uncouth, dissolute side of

Zukhin's character, however, was so obscured for me by the powerful strains of daring which I perceived in him that it did not affect me at all disagreeably.

For about two weeks I went almost every evening to Zukhin's to study. However, I did not study much, for, as I have already mentioned, I had fallen behind my fellow-students and, not having the will-power to study by myself to catch up with them, I merely pretended to listen and to understand what they read. I believe that they saw through my pretense, and I often noticed that they skipped passages which they knew and never questioned me.

With each passing day I grew more and more lenient towards the peccability of this circle, was drawn into their mode of life and found much that was poetic in it. It was only my promise to Dmitry never to go drinking with them that restrained me from sharing in their pleasures.

Once, I thought I would boast to them of my knowledge of literature, particularly French literature, and led the conversation around to this subject. To my amazement, I discovered that though they pronounced the foreign titles with a Russian accent, they had read a great deal more than I and knew and appreciated English and even Spanish writers, and Le Sage, none of whom I had ever heard of at the time. Pushkin and Zhukovsky were Literature to them (and not, as they were to me, merely books in yellow bindings which I had read and learned from as a child). They disdained Dumas, Sue and Féval alike and had, particularly Zukhin, a much sounder and sharper understanding of literature than I did, as I could not but admit. Nor did I have any advantage over them in my knowledge of music. To my yet greater astonishment, Operov played the violin, another of the students of our group played the violoncello and the piano, and both played in the University orchestra, were well-versed in music and appreciated what was good. In short, they were more knowledgeable than I in everything I wished to boast to them about, except in the pronunciation of French and German, without being at all vain. I might, then, have boasted of my social standing, but I did not possess it in the way Volodya did. What then was that eminence from which I looked down on them? My

acquaintance with Prince Ivan Ivanovich? My French pronunciation? My droshky? My cambric shirt? My fingernails? But was not all this nonsense, after all? The question began dimly to enter my mind, under the influence of the envy I felt for the cameraderie and good-natured, youthful high spirits to which I was a witness. They all used the familiar *tu* to each other. The simplicity of their intercourse often bordered on rudeness, but beneath this coarse exterior one continually sensed the dread of even slightly offending one another. *Scoundrel* and *swine*, used by them endearingly, only jarred on me and gave me cause for silent ridicule, yet these words did not offend them and did not prevent them from being on a most sincere and friendly footing with one another. In their treatment of one another they were as sensitive and considerate as only very poor and very young people can be. Above all, though, it seemed to me there was something wild and dashing about Zukhin and his adventures at The Lisbon. I felt that these revels must be quite unlike the pretense over rum punch and champagne in which I had taken part at Baron Z.'s.

Chapter 44

ZUKHIN AND SEMYONOV

I do not know to what social class Zukhin belonged, but I do know that he had graduated from the S. High School, possessed no means and was not, I believe, of the gentry. At the time, he was about eighteen, though he appeared to be considerably older. He was remarkably clever and especially quick-witted: it was simpler for him to grasp the whole of a complex subject and to foresee all its particularities and deductions than consciously to consider the laws which led to these deductions. He knew he was clever, was proud of this and, in consequence of this pride, was equally unaffected and amicable towards all. He had, no doubt, experienced a great deal in his life. Love, friendship, affairs and money had already left their mark on his ardent, receptive nature. Though on a small

scale, though in the lower strata of society, yet, there was nothing which, having once experienced it, he did not either despise or regard with mingled indifference and inattention caused by the facility with which he attained everything. He seemed to take up everything new with such ardor merely in order to disdain, having achieved his aim, what he had achieved, and his gifted nature always achieved its aim and the right to disdain it. In regard to his studies it was no different: studying very little and taking no notes, he knew his mathematics splendidly and was not boasting when he said that he would confound the professor. He felt there was a great deal of nonsense in the lectures he attended, but with the unconscious practical cunning natural to him he at once adapted himself to what the professor required, and all the professors liked him. He was outspoken in his relations with the authorities, yet the authorities respected him. Far from having any respect for or liking scholarly pursuits, he was even contemptuous of those who labored in earnest over what came to him so easily. His studies, as he understood them, did not require one-tenth of his abilities; student life offered nothing to which he could wholly devote himself, while his impetuous, active nature demanded a free rein, and he threw himself into such dissipation as his means allowed, giving himself up to it with feverish zest and a desire to spend himself "*to the limits of my abilities*". Now, just before the examinations, Operov's prediction had come true. Zukhin dropped out of sight for several weeks, so that of late we had been studying at another student's house. However, at the first examination, looking pale and haggard and with trembling hands, he appeared in the auditorium and passed to the second course brilliantly.

At the beginning of the term there had been about eight students in the company of revellers of whom Zukhin was the leader. Ikonin and Semyonov had been among their number at first, but the former had left the company, unable to bear the frantic dissipation to which they gave themselves up at the beginning of the year, while the latter left them, because even this had seemed too mild to him. At first, all the men of our class had regarded them with a

certain horror and had related their exploits to one another.

The heroes of these exploits were Zukhin and, towards the end of the term, Semyonov. In the course of time every one had come to regard Semyonov with a certain horror, and when he attended a lecture, which was seldom, indeed, a murmur would pass through the auditorium.

Shortly before the examinations Semyonov put an end to his career of dissipation in a most energetic and original manner, to which, thanks to my acquaintance with Zukhin, I was a witness. It happened like this. One evening, when we had just assembled at Zukhin's and Operov, having placed beside him a tallow candle in a bottle in addition to the one set in a candlestick, and with his head bent over his notebooks, began to read from his minutely-written notes on physics in his piping voice, the landlady entered the room and informed Zukhin that someone had come with a note for him.

Zukhin went out and returned soon after with a lowered head and a thoughtful expression on his face, holding an unfolded note written on a piece of gray wrapping paper and two ten-ruble bills.

"Gentlemen! An extraordinary event," he said, raising his head and glancing at us in a grave and solemn sort of way.

"Ah, so you've been paid for tutoring?" said Operov, leafing through his notes.

"Come, let us get on with the reading," someone said.

"No, gentlemen! I'll not read any more," Zukhin went on in the same tone of voice. "I tell you, it's an incredible event! Semyonov has sent a soldier over with these twenty rubles which he once borrowed and writes that if I wish to see him I should come to the barracks. Do you know what this means?" he added, looking around at all of us. We were all silent. "I'm going straight to him," Zukhin went on. "Whoever wishes to can come along."

We all put on our coats at once and prepared to go and see Semyonov.

"Might it not be awkward," said Operov in his piping voice, "if we all come and look at him as if he were some rare specimen, as it were?"

I quite agreed with Operov's remark, particularly inso-

far as I myself was concerned, being scarcely acquainted with Semyonov, yet I was so pleased to know I was participating in a common, comradely affair and so wished to see Semyonov that I said nothing.

"Don't be absurd!" said Zukhin. "What is awkward about us all going to say goodbye to our comrade, no matter where he be? Nonsense! Come along, whoever wishes to."

We hired cabs, took the soldier with us and drove off. At first, the warrant officer on duty would not let us into the barracks, but Zukhin managed to persuade him somehow. The same soldier who had come with the note led us into a large, quite dark room feebly lit by a few night lights down both sides of which recruits with shaved foreheads and wearing gray greatcoats sat and lay on plank beds. On entering the barracks, I was struck by a peculiar, oppressive odor and the snoring of several hundred men, and following our guide and Zukhin, who with a firm step led the way between the plank beds, I peered in trepidation at the figure of each recruit, fitting to each what my memory had retained of Semyonov's powerful, sinewy figure, long, dishevelled, almost-gray hair, white teeth and brilliant, smoldering eyes. In the very far corner of the barracks, by the last little earthenware bowl filled with black oil in which a limp wick hanging over the side burned smokily, Zukhin quickened his step and suddenly halted.

"Hello, Semyonov," he said to a recruit with a shaved forehead like the others who, wearing heavy soldier's underclothes and a gray greatcoat over his shoulders, sat cross-legged on his plank bed, eating something as he talked to another recruit. It was *he*, with his gray hair cropped, his bluish forehead shaved and with his perpetually morose and terse expression. I was afraid that my glance might offend him and so kept averting my face. Operov, too, seemed to share my opinion and hung behind the rest; however, the sound of Semyonov's voice as he greeted Zukhin and the others in his customary, abrupt way reassured us completely, and we hastened to come forth and offer: I, my hand, and Operov his "board", but Semyonov was first to proffer his large, dirty

hand, thereby relieving us of the unpleasant feeling that we might be doing him an honor. He spoke reluctantly and calmly, as always:

"Hello, Zukhin. Thanks for coming. Ah, gentlemen, sit down. Move over, Kudryashka," he said to the recruit with whom he had been eating and talking. "We'll finish our talk later. Come, sit down. Well? Were you surprised, Zukhin? Eh?"

"Nothing you do can surprise me," Zukhin replied, sitting down beside him on the plank bed with a little of the expression of a doctor sitting down on his patient's bed. "It would have indeed surprised me had you shown up for the examinations, that's for certain. But tell us: where have you been and how did this happen?"

"Where have I been?" Semyonov replied in his rich, deep voice. "In taverns and such like. Come, sit down, gentlemen, there's room enough for all. Get your feet up, you!" he shouted imperatively with a flash of his white teeth to the recruit on his left who lay with his head on his arm and watched us with lazy curiosity. "Well, I was on a bender. It was nasty. And it was good," he went on, the expression of his active face changing with each abrupt phrase. "You know the bit about the merchant: the rat died. They wanted to expel me. I ran through whatever money I had. But none of it would have mattered. I was up to my neck in debt, and they were nasty debts. And no money to settle them. So there you are."

"But how could such a thought have occurred to you?" said Zukhin.

"This is how: I was drinking at The Yaroslavl once, you know, on Ostozhenka Street. I was drinking with some merchant turned gentleman. He was a recruiting agent. I said: 'Give me a thousand rubles, and I'll join up.' And I did."

"But how could you? You're a nobleman," Zukhin said.

"Nonsense! Kirill Ivanov arranged it all."

"Which Kirill Ivanov?"

"The one who bought me." (At this his eyes flashed in an odd, amused and ironic way, and he seemed to smile.) "He obtained the permission of the Senate. I went on

drinking a while longer, paid my debts and joined up. And here I am. Well, they can't flog me ... I still have five rubles ... and perhaps there'll be a war ..."

Then he went on to tell Zukhin of his strange, incomprehensible adventures, the expression of his energetic face changing incessantly and his eyes flashing darkly.

When we could no longer remain in the barracks we began to take our leave of him. He offered his hand to each of us, shook ours firmly and without rising to see us out said:

"Drop in again some time, gentlemen. They say they won't be moving us till next month," and again he seemed to smile.

Zukhin, however, after taking several steps, turned and went back again. As I wanted to see their parting, I stopped for a moment and saw Zukhin take some money from his pocket and offer it to him, and Semyonov push his hand away. Then I saw them embrace and heard Zukhin, walking towards us again, exclaim rather loudly:

"Farewell, old boy! You'll no doubt be an officer before I graduate."

Whereupon Semyonov, who never laughed, burst into loud, unaccustomed laughter which struck me most painfully. We left the barracks.

All the way home, which we traversed on foot, Zukhin was silent and continually blew his nose, holding his finger now to one, now to the other nostril. On returning home, he at once left us and from that day forth he drank steadily right up to the examinations.

Chapter 45

I FAIL

At last, it was time for the first examination in differential and integral calculus, but I was still in a strange daze and had no clear conception of what awaited me. In the evenings, after associating with Zukhin and the other students, it occurred to me that I ought to change something in my convictions, as there was something about them that was not right, but in the mornings, when the sun shone, I again became *comme il faut*, was exceedingly

pleased to be so and desired no change in myself whatsoever.

Such was my frame of mind when I appeared for the first examination. I sat down on a bench on the side where the princes, counts and barons were sitting and began speaking to them in French, and (strange as it may seem) the thought never occurred to me that I should presently have to discourse on a subject I knew nothing about. I coolly watched those who went up to be examined and even allowed myself to make fun of some of them.

"Well now, Grap," I said to Ilenka as he was returning from the professor's table, "did you almost swoon from fright?"

"We shall see how you make out," said Ilenka who, ever since he had matriculated, had quite rebelled against my influence, did not smile when I spoke to him and was ill-disposed towards me.

I smiled disdainfully at Ilenka's reply, though the doubt he had conveyed alarmed me for a moment. But a haze again obscured this feeling, and I continued to be absent-minded and indifferent, so much so that I promised to join Baron Z. for a snack at Matern's immediately after I was examined (as though to me this was a most trifling matter). When I was called up together with Ikonin I smoothed the skirts of my frock-coat and approached the examiner's table with perfect composure.

A slight chill of apprehension ran down my spine only when the young professor, the very same one who had examined me at the entrance examination, looked me full in the face and when my fingers touched the notepaper on which the examination questions were written. Ikonin, though he had drawn a slip with the same swaying movements of his body as he had done at the previous examinations, was attempting some sort of a reply to his question, albeit a poor one; I, however, did what he had done at the first examinations, and even worse, for I drew a second slip and could not offer a coherent reply to it, either. The professor looked at me with regret and said in a quiet but firm voice:

"You will not be passed to the second course, Mr. Ir-

teniev. You need not attend the other examinations. We must weed out the faculty. Nor you, either, Mr. Ikonin," he added.

Ikonin, as though begging for alms, asked for permission to be re-examined, but the professor replied that he would not have time to do in two days what he had not done in the course of the year and that he could not possibly pass. Ikonin renewed his piteous and humble pleas, but the professor was adamant.

"You are free to leave, gentlemen," he said in the same quiet but firm voice.

Only then did I force myself to move away from the table. I felt ashamed for having seemed by my silent presence to be a party to Ikonin's humiliating entreaties. I do not remember how I crossed the auditorium, past the students, what I replied to their inquiries, how I went out into the vestibule, nor how I reached home. I was insulted, humiliated and thoroughly wretched.

For three days I did not leave my room, saw no one and, as in childhood, found solace in tears and wept copiously. I searched for pistols with which I might shoot myself, should I suddenly very much want to. I thought Ilenka Grap would spit in my face when he met me, and he would be justified; that Operov was rejoicing at my misfortune and was telling everyone about it; that Kolpikov had been quite right when he had humiliated me at The Yar; that my foolish speeches to Princess Kornakova could have had no other result, and so on, and so forth. All the depressing moments of my life, so painful to my vanity, passed through my head one after another; I attempted to blame someone else for my misfortune: I thought that someone had done all this on purpose, I invented quite an intrigue against myself, I berated the professors, my fellow-students, Volodya, Dmitry and Papa for having sent me to the University; I railed at Providence for having allowed me to come to such disgrace. At last, believing myself completely undone in the eyes of all who knew me, I besought Papa's permission to join the hussars or serve in the army in the Caucasus. Papa was displeased with me, but seeing my abject misery he endeavored to console me by saying that, unfortunate as it was,

things might still be remedied, were I to transfer to another faculty. Volodya, who also saw nothing dreadful in my misfortune, said that in another faculty I should at least not feel ashamed of myself with my new classmates.

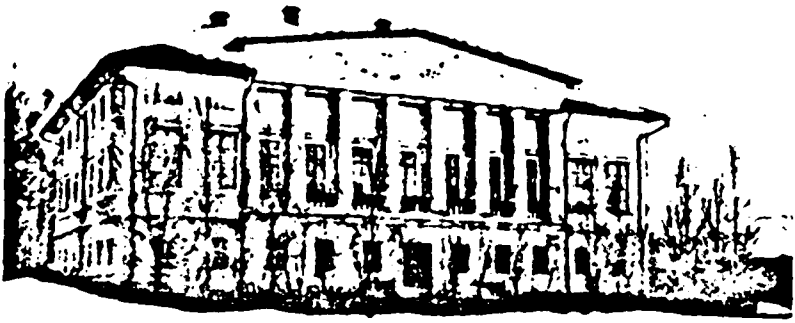
The ladies of the family did not at all understand and did not wish to, or were unable to understand what an examination was, what not passing meant and only pitied me because they saw how distraught I was.

Dmitry came to see me every day and was always exceedingly gentle; but for this very reason I imagined that he had lost his affection for me. It always seemed painful and offensive to me to have him come up to my room and silently move a chair close to me with a look rather like that of a physician sitting down on the bed of a gravely ill patient. Sofia Ivanovna and Varenka sent me books by him which I had previously wished for, and they hoped that I would come to see them; but in these very attentions I perceived a proud and insulting condescension towards one who had fallen unforgivably low. In about three days I grew somewhat calmer, yet until our departure for the country I did not set foot from the house, but wandered aimlessly from room to room, brooding over my sorrow and attempting to avoid all the members of the household.

I thought and thought, and at last, late one evening as I sat alone downstairs and listened to Avdotia Vasilyevna's waltz, I suddenly sprang to my feet, ran upstairs, took out the notebook on which I had inscribed: "Rules of Life", opened it and experienced a moment of repentance and moral resolution. I wept, but these were no longer the tears of despair. Mastering myself, I resolved to write down a fresh set of rules of life and was firmly convinced that never again would I do anything reprehensible, never spend a moment idly, nor ever go back on my rules.

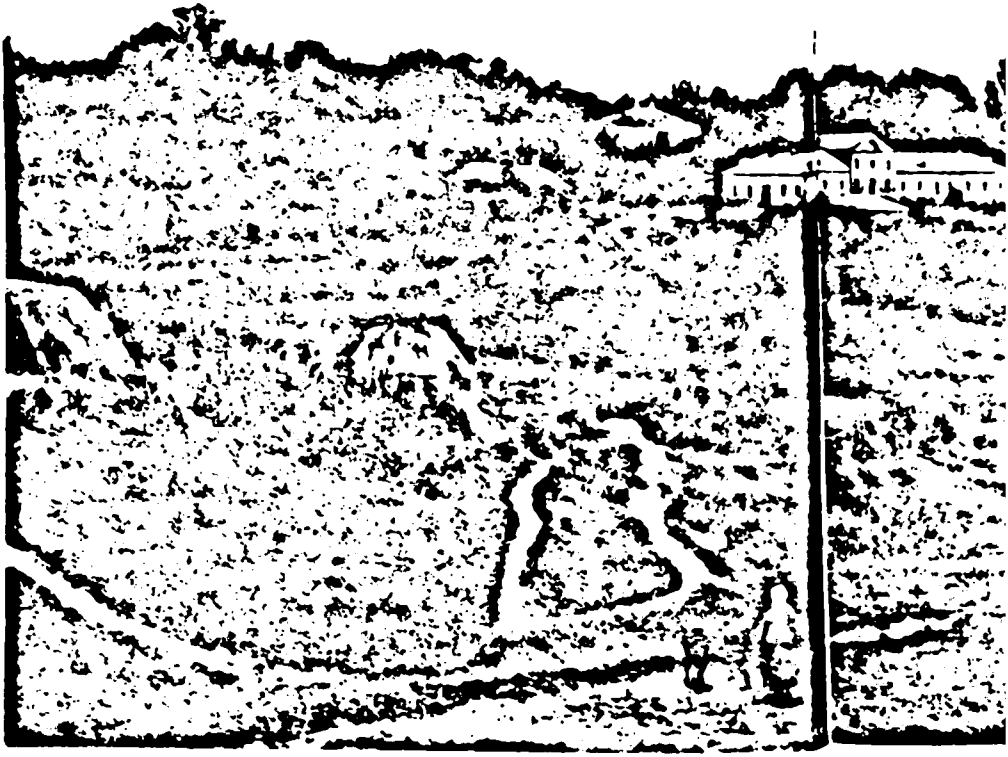
I shall relate whether this moral impulse lasted for long, what it consisted of and what new start it gave to my moral development in the following, happier part of my youth.

September 24, Yasnaya Polyana



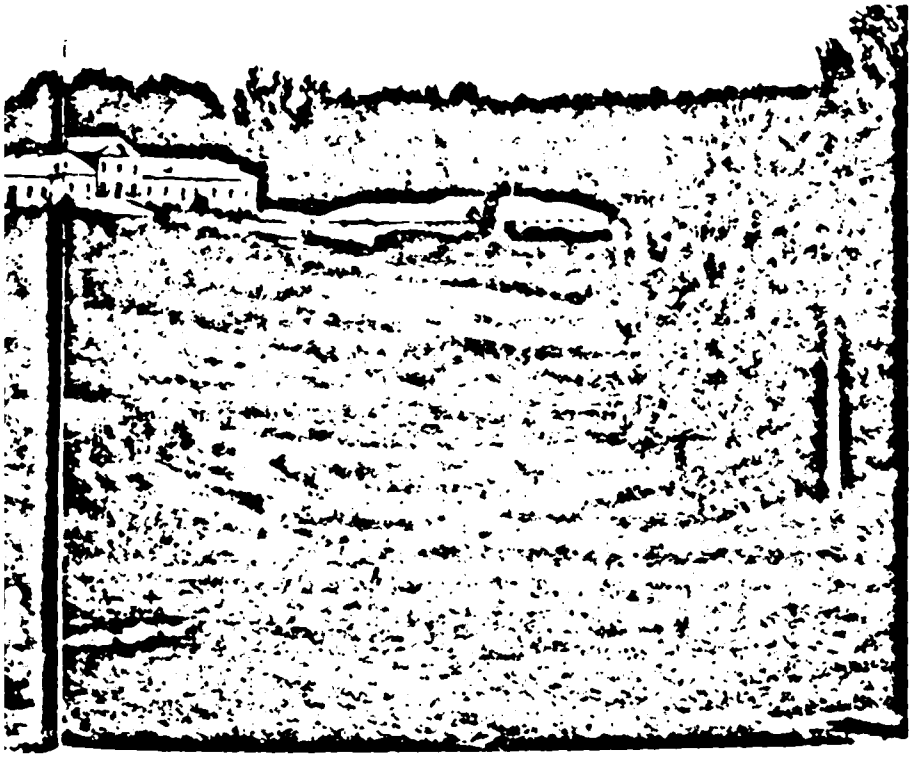
Yasnaya Polyana. The house in which Lev Tolstoy was born

The leather sofa on which Lev Tolstoy was born



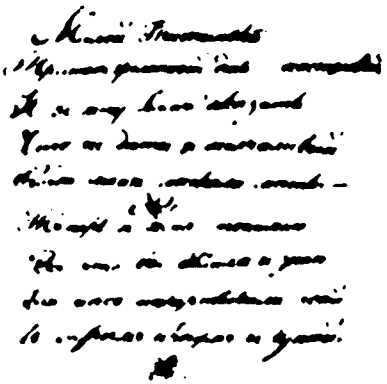
The driveway of Yasnaya Polyana. Photograph (1907)

View of Yasnaya Polyana, ancestral estate of the Tolstoys
"I can scarcely imagine Russia and my attitude towards her as distinct from my Yasnaya Polyana."



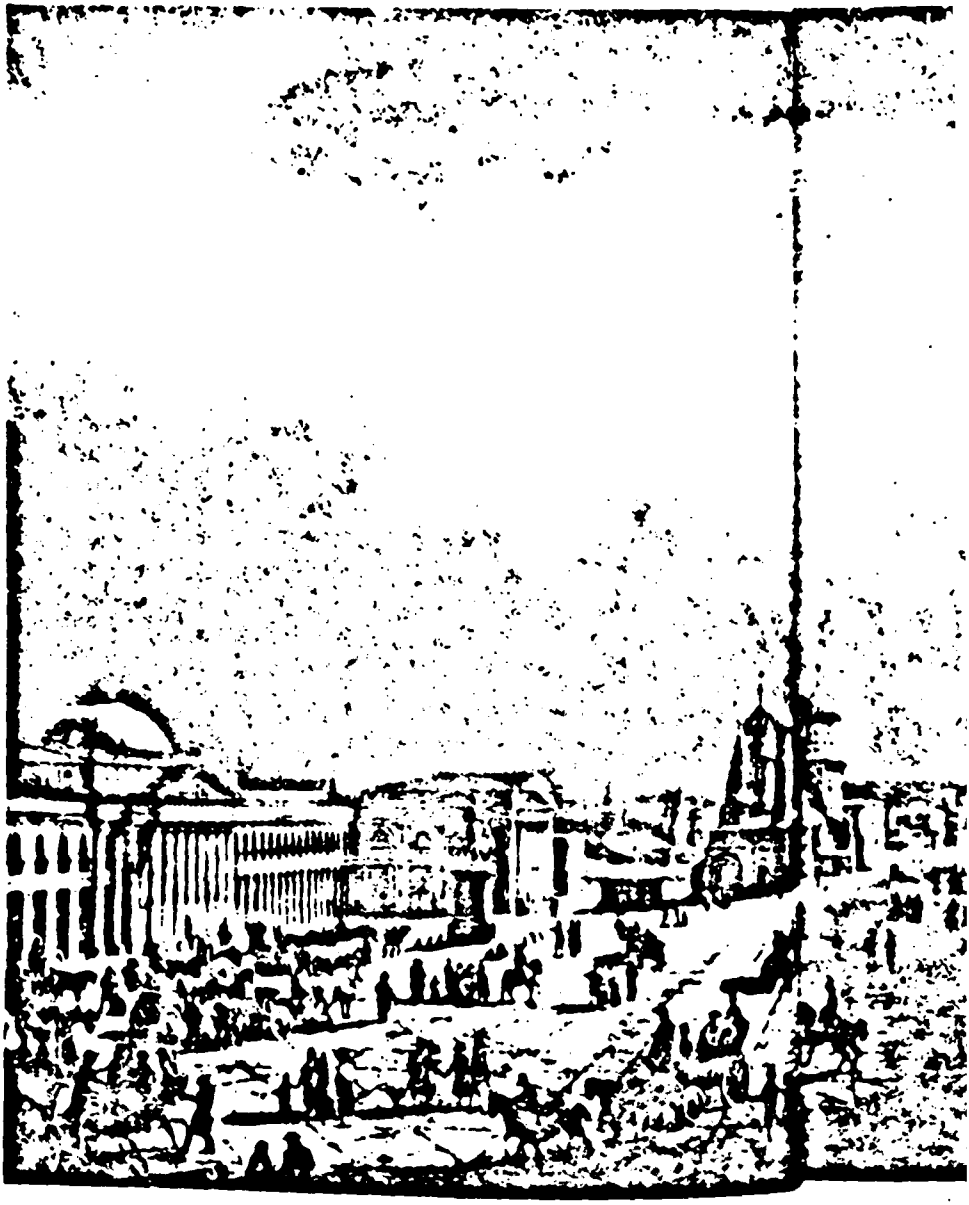
Maria Nikolayevna Tolstaya (née Volkonskaya), the writer's mother. Silhouette (late 18th century)

Nikolai Ilyich Tolstoy, the writer's father. Portrait by A. Molinary (1815)

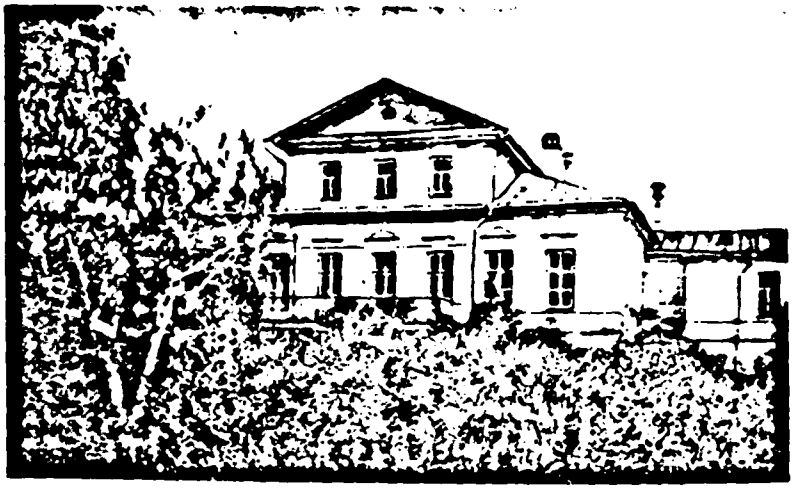


Mss of the poem "For Dear Auntie" (T. A. Ergolskaya) written by Tolstoy, aged 12, in 1840 on the occasion of her birthday

Tolstoy's aunts and guardians: A. I. Osten-Saken and P. I. Yushkova. Miniature on a travelling case which belonged to Tolstoy's mother



Red Square, Moscow. Lithograph from a drawing by A. Cadoll (1825)



The house in Kazan in which Lev Tolstoy lived when a student of Kazan University

A ball in Kazan. Painting by Tyuflev (1840s)

Lev Tolstoy as a student. Drawing by an unknown artist (1847)

Kazan University in the 1840s. Lithograph (19th century)

The salon in Yasnaya Polyana

Yasnaya Polyana. The library

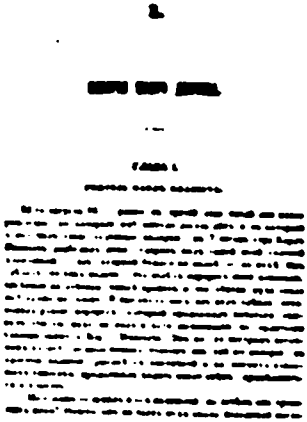
Lev Tolstoy, St. Petersburg. Daguerreotype (1849)

Lev Tolstoy and his brother Nikolai before their departure for the Caucasus. Daguerreotype (1851)

The Daryal Gorge in the Caucasus. Painting by Ivan Aivi

View of Mtskhet. Drawing by Evgeni Lanceray (1922)

Starogladkovskaya Village in the Caucasus, where Tolstoy lived in 1851. Drawing by Evgeni Lanceray (1928)



The first page of *Childhood*, Lev Tolstoy's first published work. (*Sovremennik*, No. 9, 1852)

N. A. Nekrasov (1821-1878), poet and democrat, editor of *Sovremennik* magazine. Lithograph by P. Borel

N. G. Chernyshevsky (1828-1889), revolutionary democrat, scholar and literary critic. Author of the well-known review "*Childhood, Adolescence, Military Stories*, by Count L. N. Tolstoy" (*Sovremennik*, No. 12, 1856)

"The Irtenievs' Drawing Room". Illustration for *Childhood* by D. Kardovsky (1912)

"Getting Ready for the Hunt". Illustration for *Childhood* by D. Kardovsky (1912)

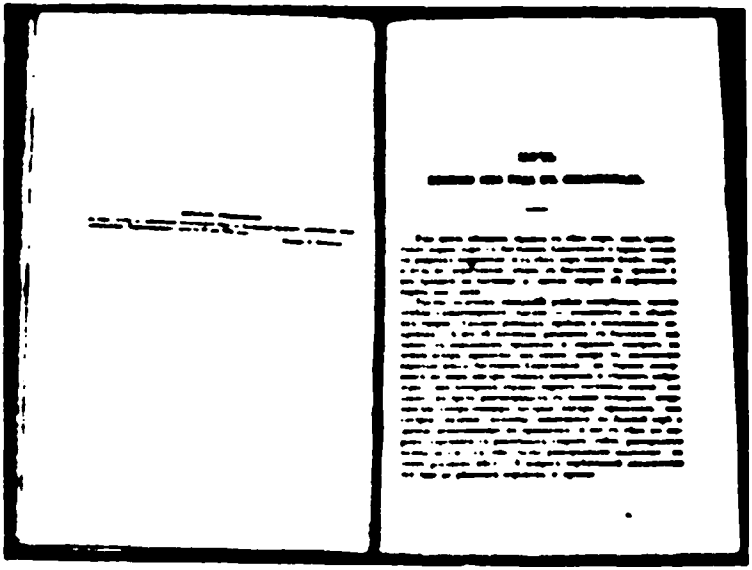
"Olenin in the Forest". Illustration for *The Cossacks* by Evgeni Lanceray (1917)

"Cossacks Pursuing Circassians". Illustration for *The Cossacks* by Evgeni Lanceray (1917)

The Crimean War of 1853-1856. Lithograph (19th century)

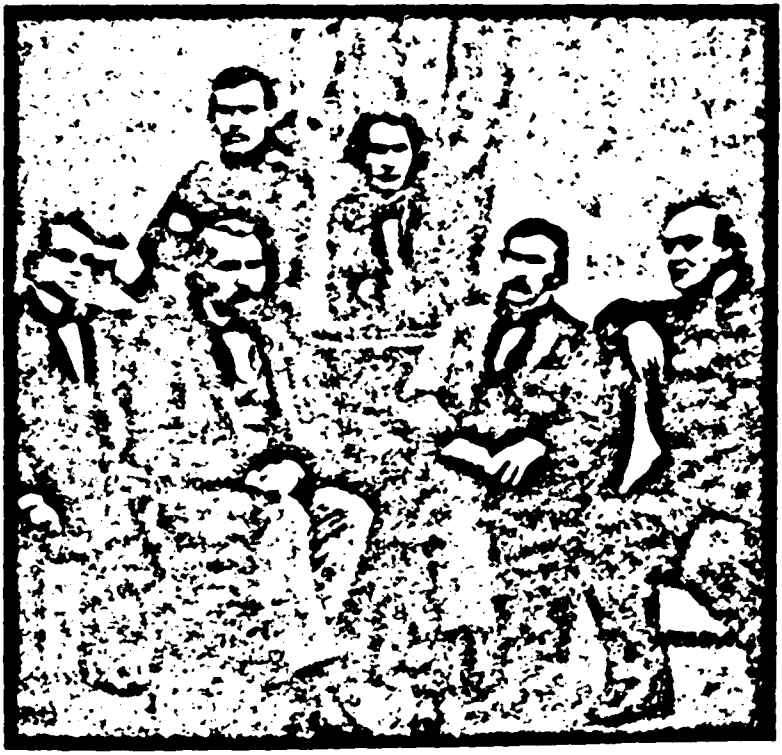
The Fourth Bastion, Lev Tolstoy's post and the most dangerous area in the defense line of Sevastopol. Lithograph (19th century)

Lev Tolstoy, artillery lieutenant (1854)



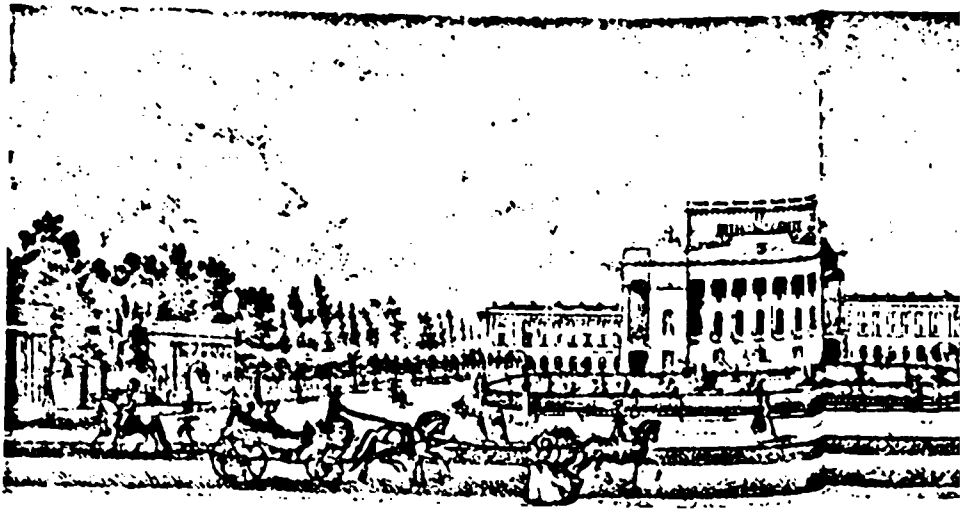
"Sevastopol in May" by Lev Tolstoy (published in *Sovremennik*, No. 9, 1855)

The heroes of Sevastopol. Lithograph

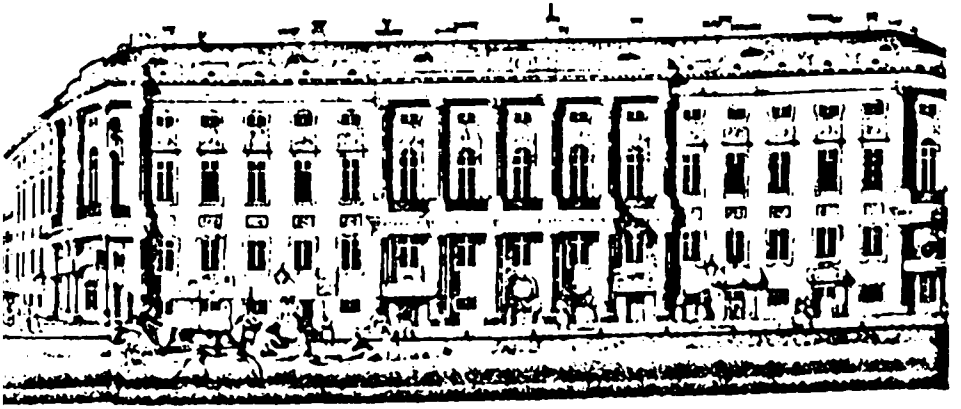


Lev Tolstoy with a group of contributors to *Sovremennik* magazine, St. Petersburg. (Seated, left to right: Ivan Goncharov, Ivan Turgenev, Alexander Druzhinin, Alexander Ostrovsky. Standing, left to right: Lev Tolstoy, Dmitry Grigorovich.) Photograph by S. Levitsky (1856)

Politseisky Bridge, Nevsky Prospekt, St. Petersburg. Drawing by V. Sadovnikov



The Alexandrinsky Theater and the Public Library, St. Petersburg. Lithograph (19th century)



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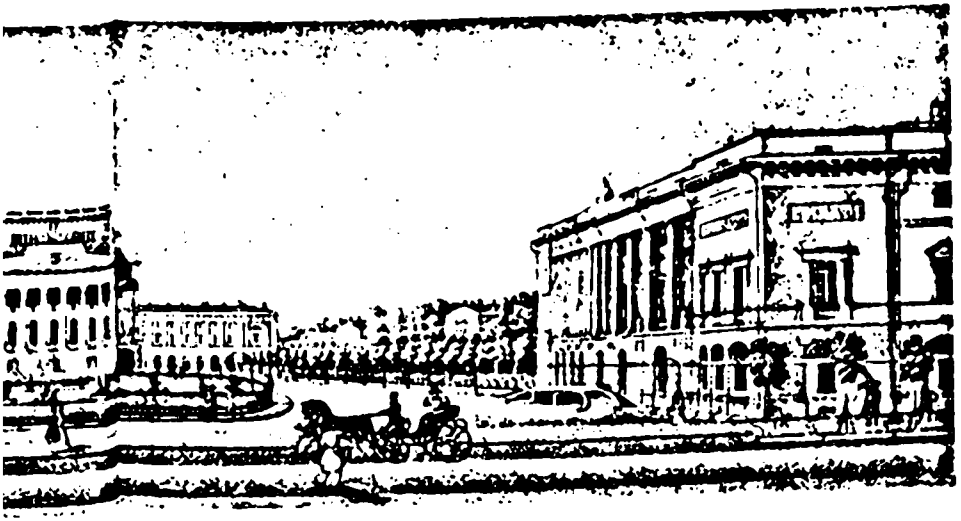

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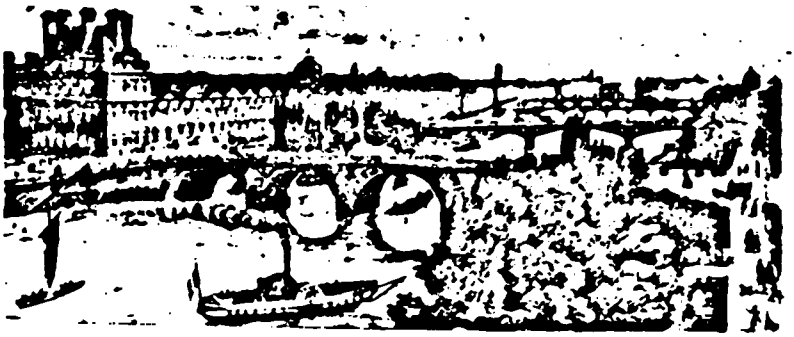
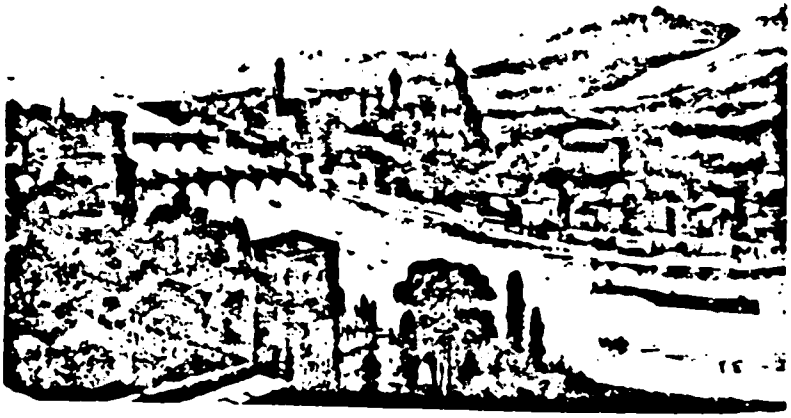
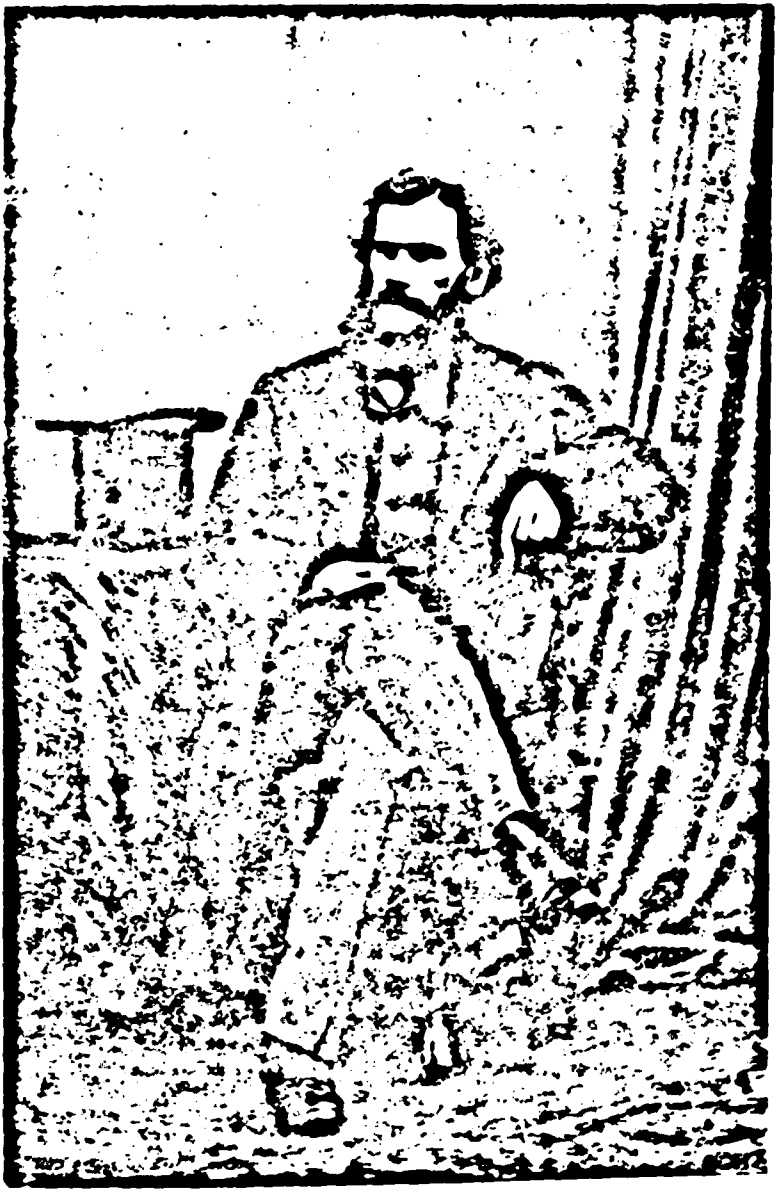


Paris. Tolstoy spent February and March of 1857 in Paris and met with Ivan Turgenev there



Florence. Tolstoy visited Florence in June 1857. Lithograph (19th century)

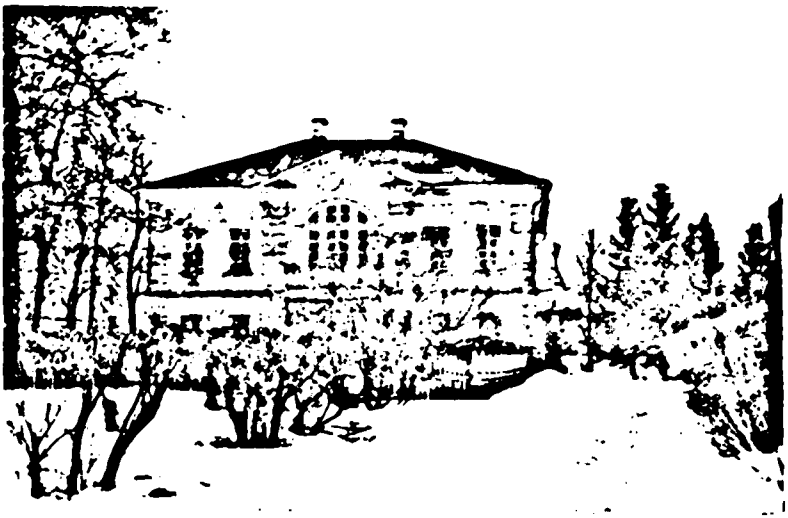


Lev Tolstoy, Brussels. Photograph (1861)

Lake Geneva. Drawing by Barbier. Tolstoy visited Switzerland in 1859 ınd studied public education there

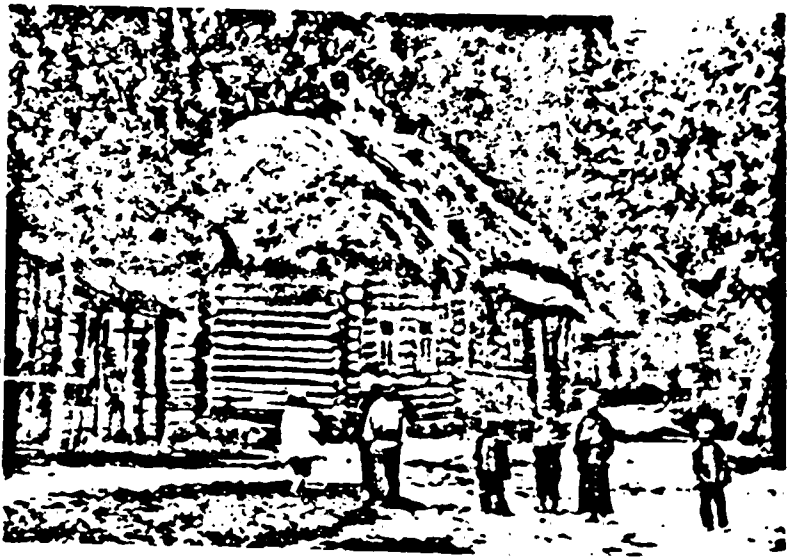
Alexander Herzen's home in the suburbs of London. Tolstoy visited m here in 1857

Alexander Herzen and Nikolai Ogaryov. This photograph, taken in 1861, was presented to Tolstoy with the following inscription by Herzen on the reverse side: "In remembrance of our meeting in Orsett House, March 28, 1861"



The schoolhouse in Yasnaya Polyana. Photograph by S. A. Tolstaya

"I want education to reach the people, to rescue the Pushkins ... and Lomonosovs."



Peasant children in Yasnaya Polyana Village. Photograph

АЗБУКА

ГРАФА Л. Н. ТОЛСТАГО

КНИГА I.

[illegible]

The title page of *The Alphabet* by Lev Tolstoy (1872)

Animal Stories by Lev Tolstoy. Illustrations by V. Favorsky (1932)

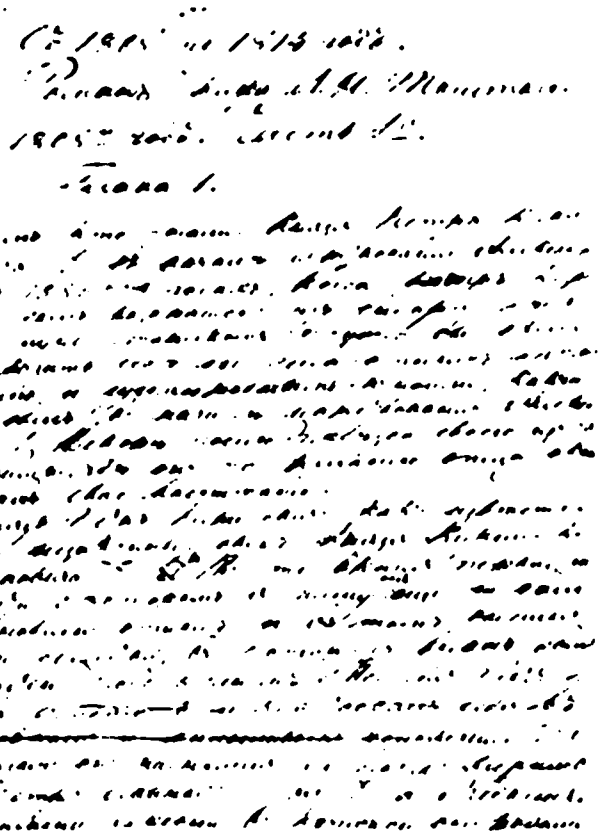
Lev Tolstoy in Moscow (1862)

Sofia Andreyevna Tolstaya, the writer's wife (1862)

The house in Yasnaya Polyana where Tolstoy lived from 1856 until 1910

Kalinkin Meadow, Yasnaya Polyana

Lev Tolstoy at work on *War and Peace*. Painting by Ilya Repin
"I endeavored to relate the history of the people."



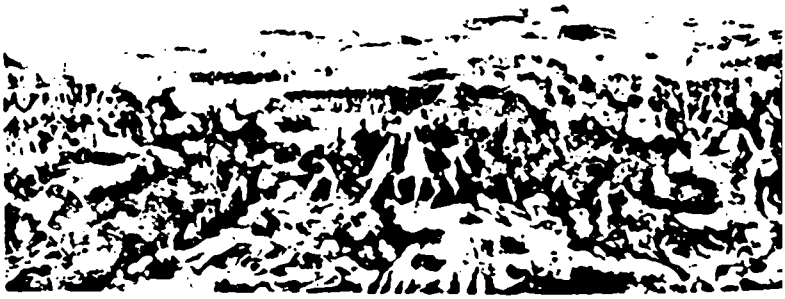
First page of *War and Peace*. 12th version
"Every evening I took the pages which Lev Nikolayevich had written i the morning and made a clean copy... It is impossible to reckon how man times I rewrote *War and Peace*." (S. A. Tolstaya)

Napoleon. Portrait by V. Vereshchagin

The Battle of Austerlitz, October 2, 1805. Engraving by Nadet

M. I. Kutuzov

"Whenever historical personages speak and act in my novel, I have not resorted to conjecture, but referred to factual data."



The Battle of Borodino. Engraving by P. Hesse

The Fire of Moscow, 1812. Engraving by Cardelli

Napoleon's flight from the Berezina. Engraving by P. Hesse

The Russian Scaevola. Folk print

"Partisans Escorting Captured French Soldiers". Illustration for *War and Peace* by D. Shmarinov (1953)

A ball in Moscow (1820s). Drawing by D. Kardovsky

The house on Povarskaya Street (now Vorovsky Street, 56, headquarters of the Soviet Writers' Union) described as the residence of the Rostovs in *War and Peace*

Lev Tolstoy at the conclusion of his work on *War and Peace*, Moscow (1868)

Tatiana and Sergei Tolstoy with their mother, S. A. Tolstaya (1866)

Yasnaya Polyana. "The Poor Man's Tree" is in the foreground. Peasants who came to Tolstoy for help and advice gathered here. Photograph (1908)

Lev Tolstoy astride his favorite horse Delir, Yasnaya Polyana. Photograph by K. Bulla (1900s)

Tolstoy mowing with Prokopy Vlasov, a local peasant. Photograph (1890)

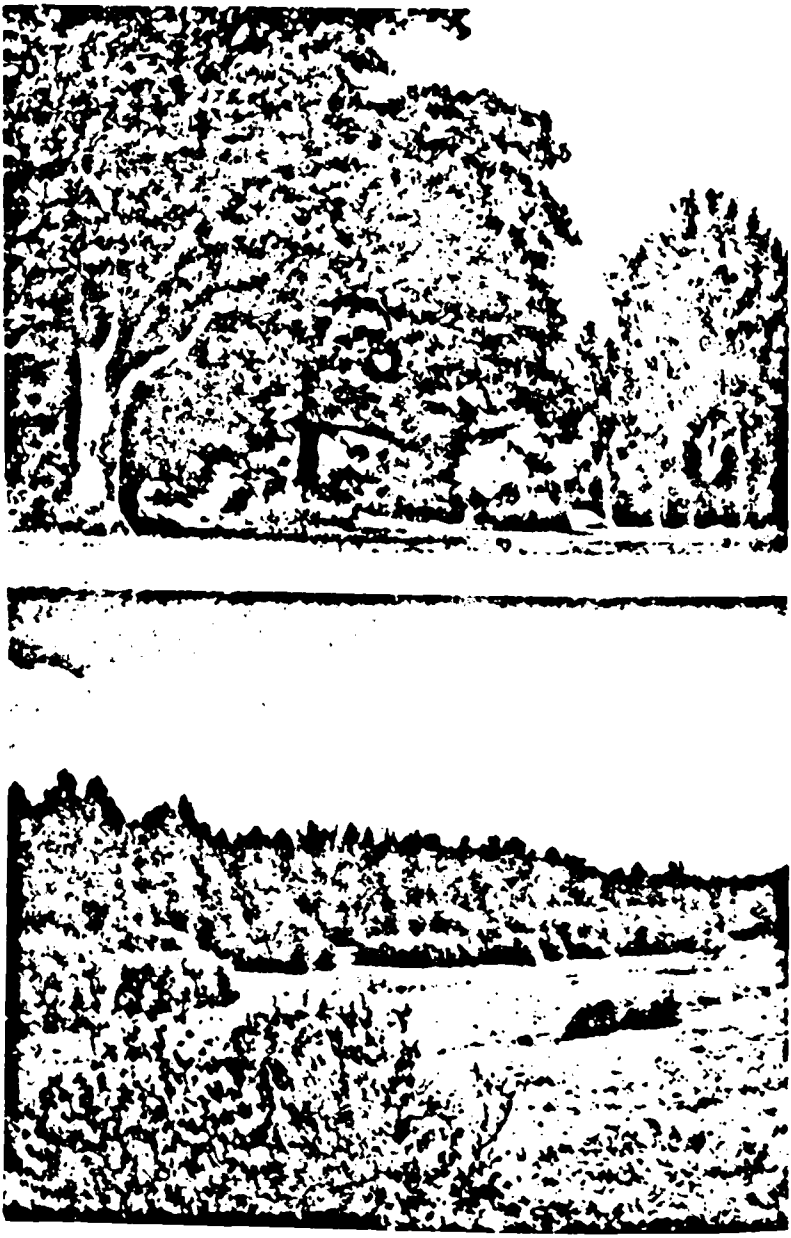
Mitrofanovskaya Grove, planted by Lev Tolstoy in Yasnaya Polyana between 1878 and 1881

Lev Tolstoy at the time he was working on *Anna Karenina*. Portrait by Ivan Kramskoi (1873)

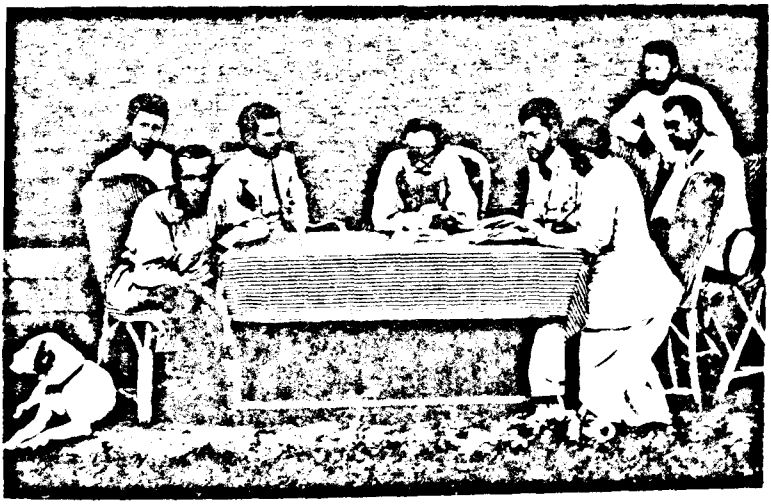
Maria Hartung (née Pushkina), Alexander Pushkin's elder daughter. Portrait by I. Makarov (1860s)

Maria Sukhotina. Portrait by K. Lash (1856). Tolstoy modeled Anna Karenina after these two women

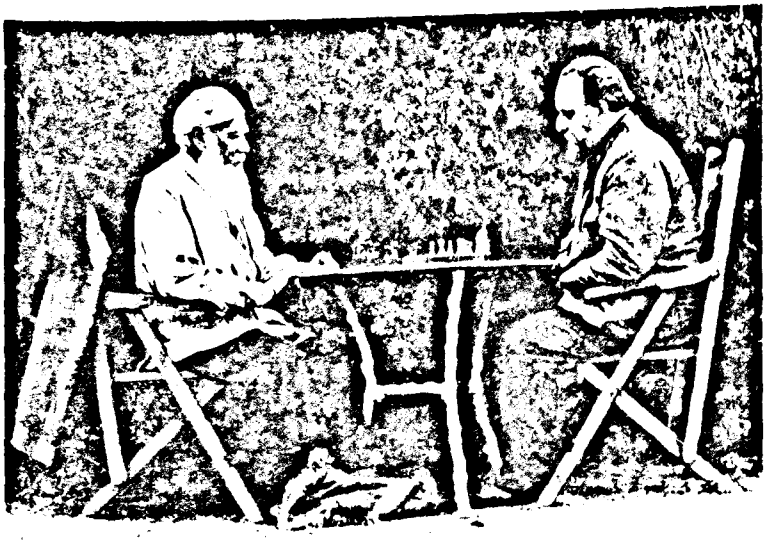
"Anna Karenina Visiting Her Son". Illustration by Mikhail Vrubel (1880s)



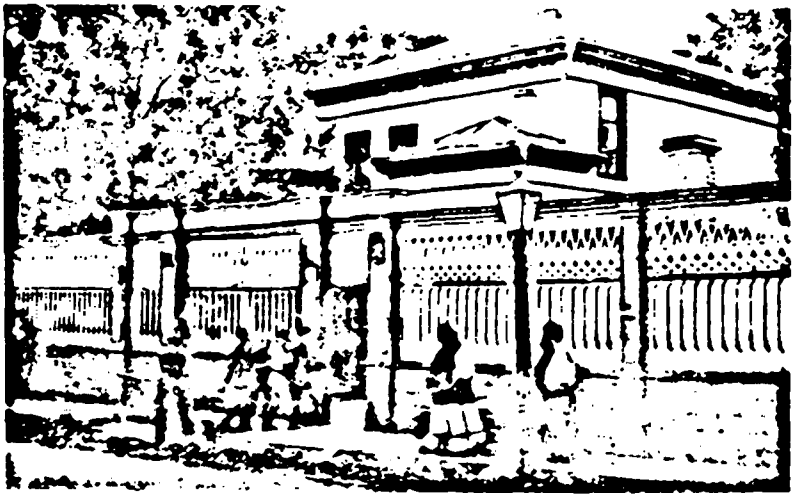
Gorelaya Grove and Yushkin Rise, Yasnaya Polyana. Views described by Tolstoy in *Anna Karenina*



Lev Tolstoy and his helpers aiding the peasants of Begichovka, Ryazan Gubernia, during the famine of 1892

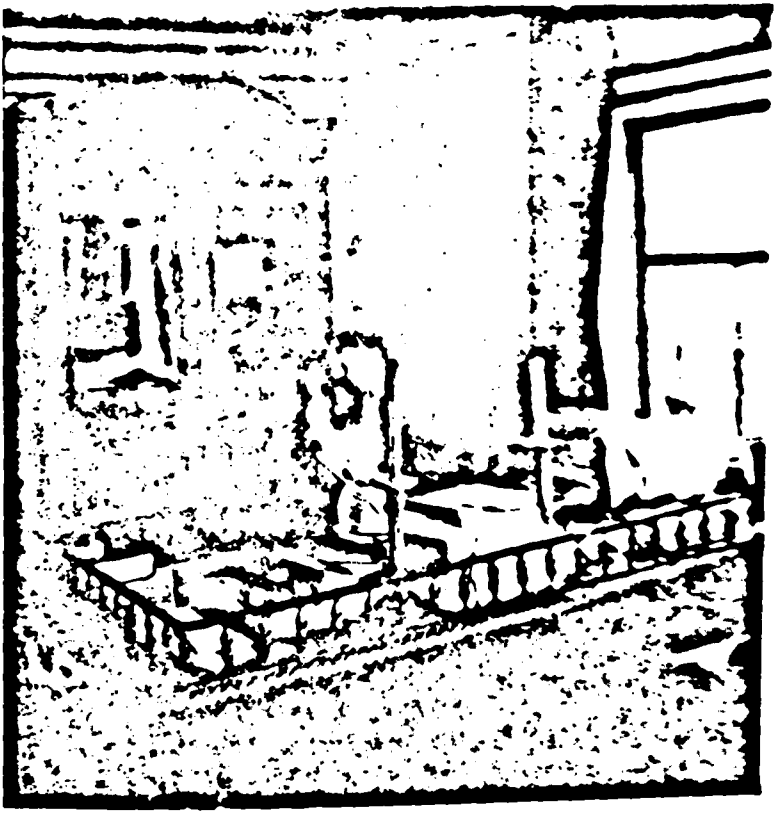


Lev Tolstoy and V. G. Chertkov playing chess



The Tolstoy home in Khamovniki, Moscow, where the writer lived from 1882 to 1901 (now the Lev Tolstoy House-Museum)

Lev Tolstoy with his family and friends, Moscow. Photograph by P. Preobrazhensky (1898)

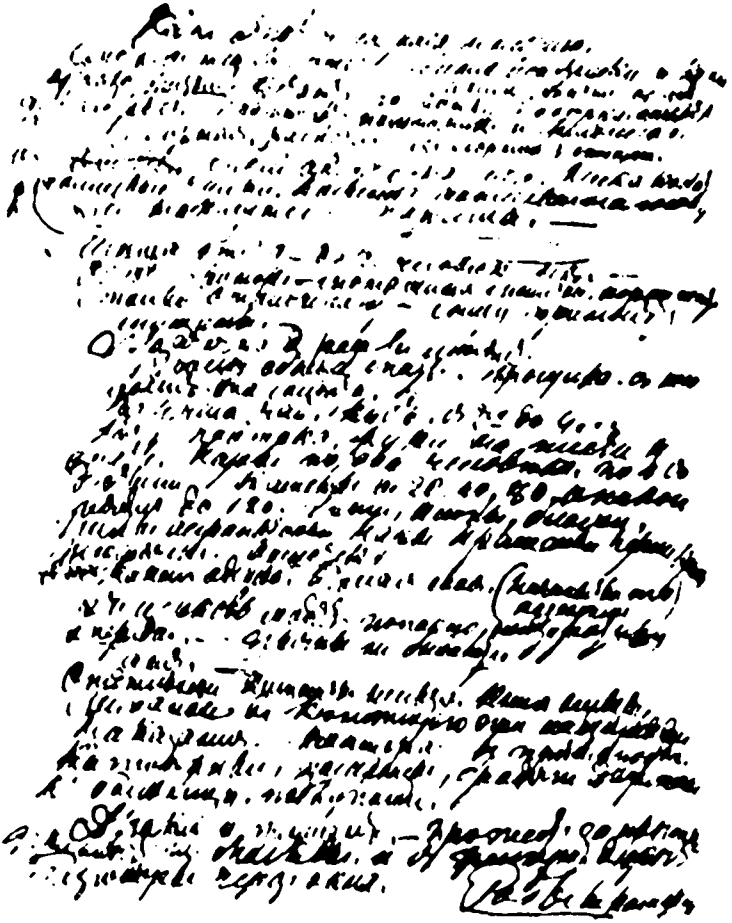


Lev Tolstoy at work. Photograph (1890s). The writer's study in Moscow. Here he wrote *Ressurection*, *The Living Corpse* and *The Kreutzer Sonata*

Lev Tolstoy ice skating in the garden. Khamovniki, Moscow. Photograph (1898)

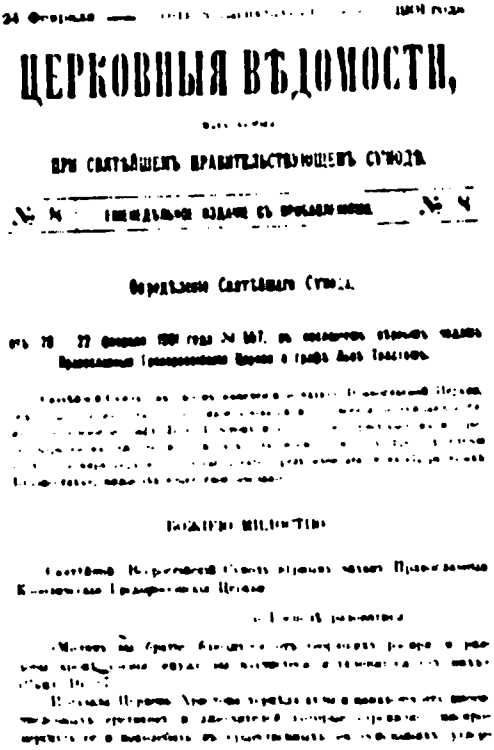
Lev Tolstoy taking part in the Moscow census, January 1882. Sketch by Ilya Repin

Lev Tolstoy and A. F. Koni, well-known criminal lawyer and writer, whose description of one of his cases provided the idea for *Ressurection*



Lev Tolstoy's list of questions submitted to prison wardens in connection with his work on *Resurrection*

"Nekhlyudov's Morning" and "Katyusha Maslova's Morning". Illustrations for *Resurrection* by Leonid Pasternak

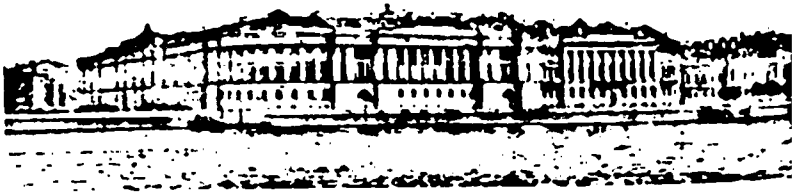


ЦЕРКОВНЫЯ ВѢДОМОСТИ,

ПРИ СВЯТѢЙШЕМЪ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВУЮЩЕМЪ СУНОДѢ

Определеніемъ Святѣйшаго Сунода

The copy of *Church News* which carried the Synod's decision to excommunicate Lev Tolstoy (1901)



The Synod, St. Petersburg. Lithograph (19th century)

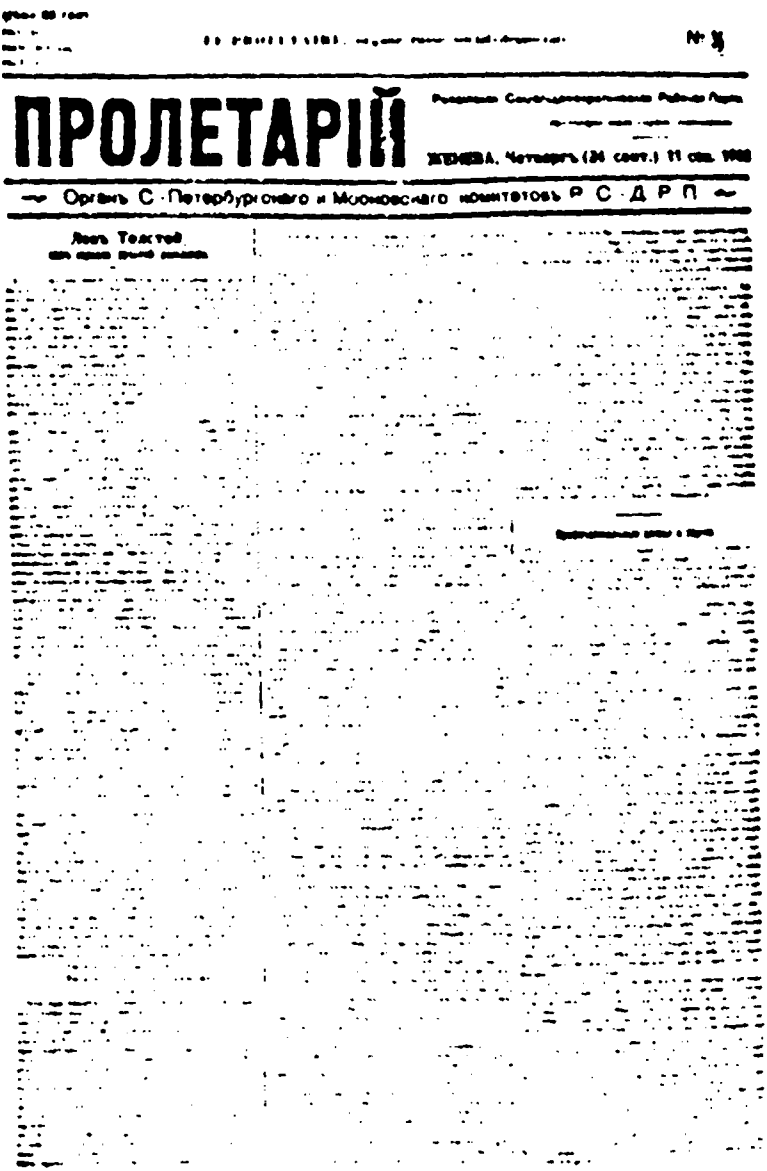
Lev Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky in Yasnaya Polyana. Photograph by Sofia Tolstaya (1900)

Lev Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov in Gaspra, October 1901. Photograph by Sofia Tolstaya

I. Ginzburg, sculptor, V. Stasov, music and literary critic, Lev Tolstoy and Sofia Tolstaya in the park in Yasnaya Polyana. Photograph (1900)

Lev Tolstoy listening to B. Troyanovsky, a famous balalaika player. Photograph (1900)

Lev Tolstoy and Ilya Repin, the artist. Photograph (1907)



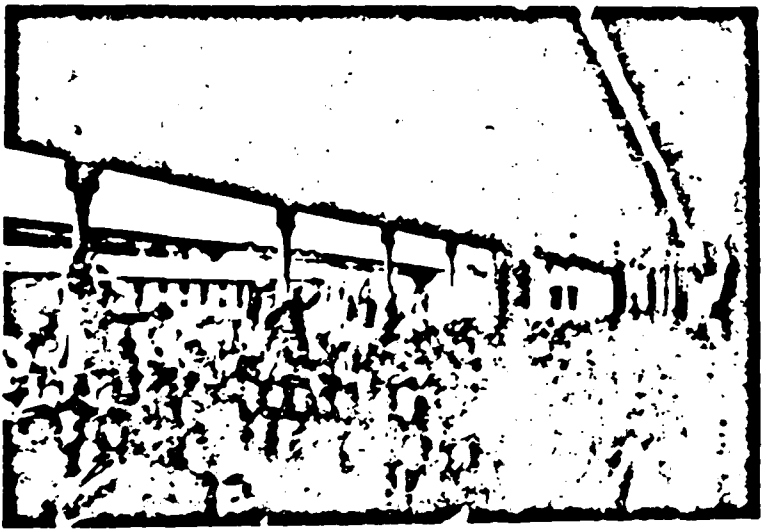
ПРОЛЕТАРІЙ

Женева, Четверг (24 сент.) 11 сент. 1908

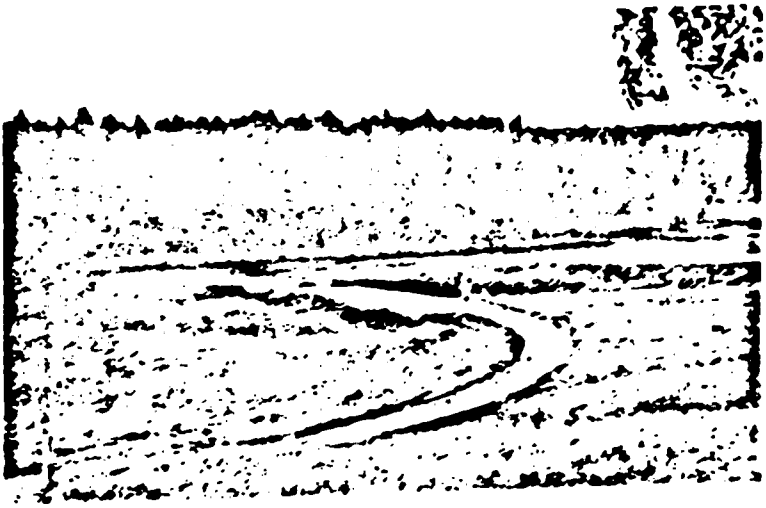
Орган С.-Петербургского и Московского комитетов Р. С. Д. Р. П.

Лев Толстой

The September 11, 1908 issue of *Proletary* carrying an article by V. I. Lenin, entitled "Lev Tolstoy as the Mirror of the Russian Revolution"



Seeing Tolstoy off to Yasnaya Polyana at the Kursk Railroad Station after the writer's last visit to Moscow (May 8, 1908)



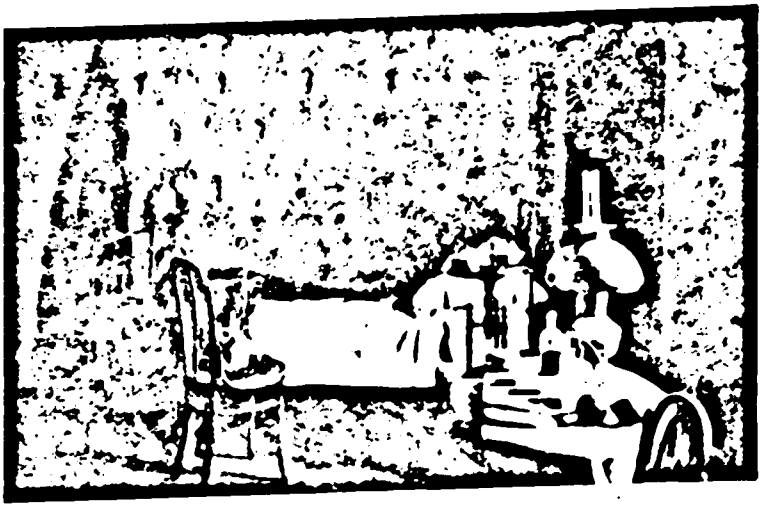
Lev Tolstoy on a walk in the environs of Yasnaya Polyana

Lev Tolstoy. One of the last photographs (1910)

Lev Tolstoy among peasant children at a party in Yasnaya Polyana. Photograph (1910)

Lev Tolstoy and Sofia Tolstaya on their 48th wedding anniversary. Tolstoy's last photograph. The inscription in Sofia Tolstaya's hand on the reverse reads: "September 23, 1910. You can't hold me back!"

Mourners paying their last respects to Lev Tolstoy at Astapovo Station, where the writer died on November 8, 1910

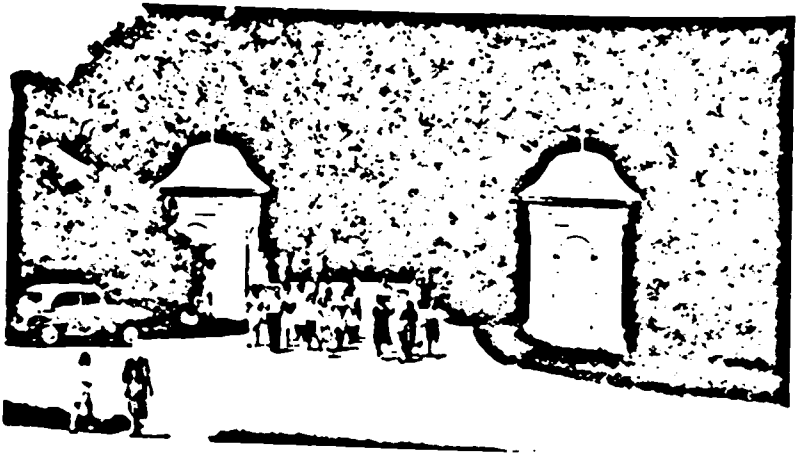


The memorial room in Astapovo

Lev Tolstoy's funeral in Yasnaya Polyana on November 9, 1910

Tolstoy's grave at the edge of a ravine in Stary Zakaz Wood, Yasnaya Polyana

The Lev Tolstoy Memorial Museum in Yasnaya Polyana



There is a never-ending stream of visitors to Yasnaya Polyana, home of one of the world's great writers

NOTES

CHILDHOOD

First published in *Sovremennik*, No. 9, 1852. In Tolstoy's biography, written in 1878 by his wife, with his participation, we read: "In the Caucasus Count L. N. Tolstoy first began writing in the romantic form. He had conceived the idea for a lengthy novel, of which 'Childhood', 'Adolescence' and 'Youth' were to be the beginning."

The Northern Bee, a newspaper published in St. Petersburg in 1825-1864.

p. 34

N. S. Semyonova (1787-1876), famous Russian opera singer.

p. 60

John Field (1782-1837), well-known Irish composer who lived in St. Petersburg from 1804 to 1831 and taught music in aristocratic families. He died in Moscow. p. 61

Louis Segur (1753-1830), French historian and diplomat. Ambassador to Russia in the 1780s, author of the widely-read "Memoirs" about the years he spent in Russia.

p. 88

ADOLESCENCE

First published in *Sovremennik*, No. 9, 1854, with the following commentary by the editors: "In the 9th issue of the magazine for 1852 we published a story entitled 'Childhood', which our readers no doubt recall. It was actually the first part of a novel, to be entitled 'Four Periods of Development'. We are now offering you the second part of the novel, which, as the first, is of interest as a separate story."

N. A. Nekrasov wrote to Tolstoy on July 10, 1854, on receiving the manuscript: "...I cannot find words to sufficiently praise your latest contribution... The author's talent is original and most attractive..." N. G. Chernyshevsky's review of *Childhood, Adolescence* and *Military Stories* appeared in the 12th issue of *Sovremennik* for 1856.

Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854), leading representative of German idealist philosophy who had many followers in Russia in the 1830s.

p. 196

Alphonse Karr (1808-1890), French writer whose novels and poems were very popular in Russia in the middle of the 19th century. p. 215

YOUTH

First published in *Sovremennik*, No. 1, 1857, and entitled "Youth. Part I".

Louis Franker (1773-1849), French mathematician and the author of several textbooks which, beginning with the 1820s, were adopted for use in Russian high schools and universities. p. 221

Charles Rappeau, well-known gymnast who performed in Moscow in 1839. p. 225

"*Let us rejoice while we are young*", a traditional Latin students' song. p. 264

Ivan Yakovlevich Koreisha, well-known Moscow soothsayer. p. 299

"*At the banquet of life, unfortunate guest...*" from the then popular "*Ode, imitee de plusieurs psaumes*" (Ode in Imitation of Many Psalms) by N. J. Gilbert (1750-1780).

Paul Féval (1817-1887), French novelist, author of crime and mystery stories. p. 375

Alain Le Sage (1668-1747), French novelist and dramatist. p. 375

"Childhood", "Adolescence" and "Youth" first appeared as a trilogy in Volume I of *The Works of Count L. N. Tolstoy*, published in 1864.

TOLSTOY, HIS LIFE AND WORK

1828	Born August 28 (Sept. 9) on the family estate, Yasnaya Polyana.
1830	Death of Tolstoy's mother, Maria Nikolayevna (née Princess Volkonskaya).
1837	The Tolstoys move to Moscow. Death of Tolstoy's father, Count Nikolai Ilyich Tolstoy.
1841	Death of Princess A. I. Osten-Saken, guardian of the Tolstoy children. They move from Moscow to Kazan and to their new guardian, P. I. Yushkova.
1844	Tolstoy matriculates as a student of Kazan University (the Faculty of Arabic and Turkic Languages).
1845	Transfers to the Faculty of Law.
1847	Gives up the University and leaves for Yasnaya Polyana, inherited from his father.
1849	Successfully passes the first two examinations in St. Petersburg University for his Candidate's degree, then gives up the University.
1851	"Childhood" is begun (completed in 1852). Leaves for the Caucasus.
1852	Enlists as a gentleman volunteer in an artillery unit. His first published work, "Childhood", appears in *Sovremennik* magazine (No. 9, 1852), and he begins work on "Adolescence" (completed in 1854).
1853	Participates in an expedition against the Chechens. Begins work on "The Cossacks".
1854	Receives his commission and is transferred to the Crimean Army. Arrives in Sevastopol (the Crimean War of 1853-1856).
1855	Arrives in St. Petersburg and becomes acquainted with many of the leading Russian writers of the day. Begins work on "Youth" (completed in 1856).
1856	Retires from the army and settles in Yasnaya Polyana. Attempts to free his serfs.
1857	Travels abroad, visiting France, Switzerland and Germany.
1860-1861	Travels abroad, visiting Germany, Switzerland, France, England and Belgium.

1859-1862	Teaches peasant children in the school he started in Yasnaya Polyana.
1861-1862	Accepts an appointment to a magistracy introduced by the Emancipation Act of 1861 for the settling of land disputes between landowners and their former serfs. Publishes a pedagogical journal, *Yasnaya Polyana*.
1862	Marries Sofia Behrs, the 18-year-old daughter of Dr. A. Behrs, a court physician.
1863	Begins work on *War and Peace* (completed in 1869).
1864-1865	Publication of the first two-volume edition of *The Works of Count L. N. Tolstoy*.
1871	Publication of *The Alphabet*.
1873	Begins work on *Anna Karenina* (completed in 1877). Ivan Kramskoi paints Tolstoy's portrait in Yasnaya Polyana.
1882	Participates in the 3-day census in Moscow. Becomes acquainted with the life of the city poor and the slums. Purchases a house in Khamovniki in Moscow (now the Lev Tolstoy House-Museum).
1884	Sets up a printing house to publish books for the people.
1891	Helps organize aid to the famine-stricken peasants of Ryazan Gubernia. Writes articles on famine.
1899	*Niva* magazine publishes the novel *Resurrection* (with extensive cuts by the censor). The full text is put out in England by V. G. Chertkov, Tolstoy's friend and supporter.
1901	The Synod excommunicates Tolstoy.
1903-1910	Begins his memoirs, writes articles, essays and short stories condemning the war (the Russo-Japanese War of 1903-1905), the death penalty and the private ownership of land.
1910	Leaves Yasnaya Polyana on October 28, falls ill and dies in the station master's room at Astapovo Station on November 8 (21).